AQWĀL-E-SALAF

BIOGRAPHIES AND STATEMENTS OF THE PIOUS PREDECESSORS

Vol - 2

HAZRAT MAULĀNĀ
MUHAMMED QAMARUZZAMĀN SAHIB
ALLĀHBĀDI DĀMAT BARKĀTUHM

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Maktabah Dār al-Maʿārif Ilāhābād has had the honour of publishing many beneficial and helpful books of biographies, *mawāʾiz* (exhortations), rules and regulations, purification of souls, etc. These were appreciated by scholars and people who have an inclination for such subjects, and they encouraged the publishers through their views and evaluations. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them with the best of rewards.

Māshā Allāh, we had the honour of producing a few important books recently, e.g. *Riyād as-Sunnah* – in two volumes - which is an abridged version of *Tarjumān as-Sunnah* of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Badr-e-ʿĀlam Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, *Bārān-e-Maʿrifat*, and *Ziyārat-e-Haramayn* which was previously published as *Ziyārat-e-Haram*.

The book before you is the third edition of *Maʾāthir al-Ambiyāʾ wa as-Siddīqīn wa Āthār ash-Shuhadāʾ wa as-Sālihīn*, titled *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*, volume two. In addition to the biographies and lives of the Tābiʿīn, Tābiʿāt and Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn, it also contains the biographies, and statements together with the date of demise of famous *auliyāʾ* until the fourth century of the *hijrah*. This collection was undertaken with much effort and toiling. We make *duʿāʾ* to Allāh *taʿālā* to enable us

to emulate and follow these *Ahlullāh* (pious servants of Allāh *taʿālā*). Āmīn.

Finally, I request the readers to make *duʿā'* for my beloved and respected father – may Allāh *taʿālā* give him long life with good health and wellness, and may He fully reward all those who helped in the publication of this book. Āmīn. Yā Rabbal ʿĀlamīn.

Muhammad ʿAbdullāh Qamar az-Zamān Qāsimī Ilāhābādī
Maktabah Dār al-Maʿārif, Ilāhābād
Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1431 A.H./October 2010

INTRODUCTION

الحمد لله رب العالمين، الرحمن الرحيم، ملك يوم الدين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين وشفيع المذنبين، وعلى اله وصحبه وعلى من تبعهم أجمعين إلى يوم الدين.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the first volume of *Aqwāl-e-Salaf* which was published with many beneficial additions was very much appreciated by the masses, the *ʿulamā'* and the *mashā'ikh*. May Allāh *taʿālā* also accept it through His grace and guide us all. In my introduction to the first volume of *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*, I had noted certain necessary points. These are applicable to this volume as well.

1. Some elders advised me to add the biographies and statements of a few more personalities so that the readers may learn more about our elders. *Inshā Allāh*, this will be a means of establishing a bond with and confidence in our elders. In fact, this will encourage and spur them to act on the teachings and guidelines of our elders.

I endeavoured to embellish this volume with biographies of even more Tābiʿīn, Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn and *Auliyā'*. I also added comments wherever applicable. May Allāh *taʿālā* make this beneficial. Āmīn.

2. As in the first volume, I was particular about adding the year of death of each personality. My

dear Maulwī Maqsūd Ahmad Sāhib worked very hard in this regard. However, we were not able to learn the year of death of a few personalities.

3. In this volume as well, I received a lot of help from Maulānā Jamīl Ahmad Nadhīrī Mubārakpūrī, Maulānā Yūsuf Sāhib Tankārwī, Qārī Nāzir Husayn Sāhib, and Maulwī Samīʿullāh Sāhib Tarkesarī in the collating, formatting and additions to this book. As previously, Maulānā Sābir ʿAlī Sāhib, Maulwī Kamāl al-Hudā, and Maulwī Fīroz ʿĀlam Qāsimī provided me with a lot of material from different books of biographies. I then made additions and subtractions to these, collated them, and handed them over to Maulānā Maqsūd Ahmad Sāhib who undertook an in-depth study of them, made corrections and additions wherever necessary, and after completing all this, he handed it over to a calligrapher. Once this task was completed, he made further corrections to the hand-written copies. In short, this second volume was completed after all this painstaking work, and is now being sent to the printing press.

I make *duʿā'* to Allāh *taʿālā* to enable this book to be presented to the public with an excellent print. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Ilāhābādī
Madrasah ʿArabīyyah Bayt al-Maʿārif, Bakhshī Bāzār Ilāhābād
14 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1431 A.H./23 October 2010

EVALUATION

Maulānā Diyā' ad-Dīn Sāhib Islāhī *rahimahullāh* – Dār al-Musannifīn, A'zamgarh

Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib had the opportunity of remaining in the service and obtaining guidance and rectitude under two senior *shuyūkh* of the Tarīqah of this era, viz. Maulānā Wasīyyullāh Sāhib Fatahpūrī *rahimahullāh* and Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh*. He has thus experienced the joy of *tasawwuf* and attachment to the Sufis and *mashā'ikh*. This book is a manifestation of confidence in and love for the Sufis and pious elders of *Dīn*. In this book, he compiled and translated the sayings and statements of the *Auliyā'* and *Sulahā'* (reformers) from *at-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā* of Hadrat Shaykh 'Abd al-Wahhāb Sha'rānī *rahimahullāh*. He also provided concise explanations to some of the statements.

This book is essentially an abridged version of Imām Sha'rānī's *rahimahullāh* book, but the compiler resorted to a few other books to obtain the statements and sayings of other pious personalities. He commenced with the pure words of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* in which he quoted the Urdu translation of Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh's *rahimahullāh* collection of forty Ahādīth. He followed this with the sayings of the Khulafā' Rāshidīn, other Sahābah *radiyallāhu*

ʿanhum, Sahābiyāt *radiyallāhu ʿanhunna*, and Tābiʿīn. He gradually came down to the end of the third century of the *hijrah*. This is the first volume of this book. The other volumes will contain the sayings of the personalities who came later. He provided a few beneficial points about the merits of the *Auliyā'* and *Sulahā'* in the beginning. These pure and heart-rending statements, and sayings of wisdom and cognition are very effective and influential on the soul. A person who reads them experiences a special joy and ecstasy. (*Maʿārif*, September 1987)

Maulānā Diyā' ad-Dīn Sāhib Islāhī hails from Sehrāyā, a village near Aʿzamgarh. He was born in 1937 in Jayrājpūr, the village of his maternal family. He took admission in Madrasah al-Islāh at the age of ten. He derived benefit from the expert teachers at this institute, and when he was almost twenty years old, he joined Dār al-Musannifīn. It was not easy to become academically affiliated to Dār al-Musannifīn at such a young age. But the Maulānā demonstrated from the very first day that he was a gift of Allāh *taʿālā* to this exceptional academic institute.

Despite the numerous accolades and lofty positions which were accorded to the Maulānā, he was an example of humility and submission. He was an embodiment of simplicity, friendliness, and sociability. He would speak very gently with even the most ordinary workers. Patience and

forbearance were also his sterling qualities. He adhered strictly to fasting and salāh, and had a special attachment with reading the Qur'ān.

The Maulānā returned from hajj on 3 January 2008 and was going to visit a relative on the 1st of February. His Jeep met in an accident a little before Sarā'imīr and he was badly injured in this accident. Despite his unstable condition, he constantly repeated the name of his Creator, by saying: "Allāh, Allāh." This was an affirmation from Allāh *taʿālā* of his close proximity and acceptance in His sight – it is an end which every Muslim hopes for. Just as Allāh *taʿālā* had decreed honour for him in this world, He also bestowed him with the highest honour of martyrdom. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (quoted from *Maʿārif*, March 2008)

A LETTER FROM MUFTĪ MAHMŪD HASAN SĀHIB GANGOHĪ *rahimahullāh*

My dear and honourable brother. May your merits increase.

As salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

You honoured me by sending me a copy of *Aqwāl-e-Salaf* volume two. I perused through it here and there. You undertook a unique selection. It is a very demanding task to take extracts from lengthy lives and diverse conversations for the purpose of rectification and tutoring. But Allāh *taʿālā* made this task easy for you by His grace.

Some of the places which I read made me feel as if an operation was being performed on a painful vein. This book also contains a cure for diseases – like cancer - which people consider incurable. Had the date of birth and death of the personalities whose statements are quoted also been mentioned, it would have been more beneficial for the students.[1] May Allāh *taʿālā* accept your service and bestow you with more *taufīq* (inspiration). That is all.

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[1] *Al-hamdu lillāh*, we have now done this in all the volumes. A brief account of Hadrat Muftī Sāhib's *rahimahullāh* life and statements are contained in volume seven of *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*.

Was salām

Dictated by the servant, Mahmūd, *may Allāh forgive him.*
Chattah Musjid, Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband
14/10/1409 A.H.

EVALUATION

Hadrat Dr. Hāfiz Salāh ad-Dīn Ahmad Siddīqī *rahimahullāh* – Khalīfah of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ – نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

Before I can write anything about this book, I will relate one of my personal incidents. On one occasion, I made a request to Hadrat Muslihul Ummat ʿĀrif Billāh Shāh Wasīyyullāh *quddisa sirruhu* by saying: "I would like my two daughters to become *ʿālimahs*. How should I go about getting them educated?" Hadrat responded spontaneously: "Qamar az-Zamān will teach them. And once they mature, he will teach them from behind a veil."

In addition to this, whenever I asked him for a ruling, Hadrat would explain each point himself. But when he used to get up to leave for his house, he would say to me: "Doctor Sāhib! You must also pose this question to Qamar az-Zamān." My heart and mind were immediately filled with respect for his excellent good deeds, knowledge and conviction. A poet says:

"This good fortune is not due to my personal strength. It can only be achieved through the generosity, grace and favour of the affectionate Allāh."

Several books of the Maulānā have already been published, e.g. *Tadhkirah Musliḥul Ummat, Faydān-e-Muḥabbat Sharḥ ʿIrfān-e-Muḥabbat, Aqwāl-e-Salaf* volume one, and so on. *Māshā Allāh*, his style of writing is very appealing and the moment a person reads it, it settles in the heart and provides joy and ecstasy to the heart. *Aqwāl-e-Salaf* is an unparalleled book as regards its comprehensiveness. It contains the sayings and statements of the pious elders, and is beneficial to the novice and the expert, the *ʿulamā'* and the *sulaḥā'*. I make *duʿā'* to Allāh *taʿālā* to enable those who are treading the path and the masses to derive maximum benefit from it, and – *inshā Allāh*, a study of this book will polish and purify people internally and externally. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* in the beginning and the end.

Salāḥ ad-Dīn Aḥmad, *may Allāh pardon him*
19 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1409 A.H./November 1988

The honourable Doctor Sāḥib *raḥimahullāh* was born in Bhartī, district Ghāzīpūr. He spent his childhood with his father who was an inspector in Deoband, Sahāranpūr, Thānābhawan and surrounding areas. As a result, he had the opportunity of meeting the *ʿulamā'* and *mashā'ikh* of the region. He spent time in the company of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *raḥimahullāh* and had the good fortune of walking in and out of his inner room.

I think he first completed the *hifz* of the Qur'ān in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband and commenced studying the primary books of Arabic and Persian. He then studied medicine in the Medical College in Ilāhābād. When Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* came to Ilāhābād in 1957/1377 A.H. he remained with him until 1387 A.H. when Hadrat *rahimahullāh* went for hajj. His hajj journey actually proved to be his journey to the Hereafter. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

Māshā Allāh, Hadrat *rahimahullāh* honoured him with *khilāfah* and the permission to accept *bayʿah*. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* considered him to be a *sāhib-e-hāl* (one who constantly enjoys the consciousness of Allāh *taʿālā*) and one whose *duʿā's* are readily accepted.

Doctor Sāhib rendered many services. He was at the forefront in purchasing the house at 23 Bakhshī Bāzār, and had the good fortune of initiating the periodical, *Maʿrifat-e-Haqq*. He then started an entire residential area named after Hadrat *rahimahullāh*. It was named Wasīyyābād. He was also instrumental in building the Jāmiʿ Musjid in this area. This is where I perform my *fajr salāh*. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

After experiencing a long illness, he passed away on a Thursday night on 8 Dhū al-Hijjah 1430 A.H. corresponding with 26 November 2009. I had the opportunity of leading the people for his

janāzah salāh the next day, after the *jumuʿah salāh*, in front of the Jāmīʿ Musjid of Wasīyyābād. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave.

A LETTER FROM MAULĀNĀ MUHAMMAD YŪNUS SĀHIB

(A special student of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* and the *nāzim* of Da'watul Haqq, Kaddī, Gujarat)

My respected and honourable brother. May Allāh *ta'ālā* perpetuate your kindness and affection, and may He extend your lofty shade.

As salāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I hope you are well. I was most pleased at receiving your gift, *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*, via the post today. When I started reading it, I experienced immense joy and continued reading. I was forced to keep the book aside when the time of salāh approached. *Māshā Allāh*, may Allāh *ta'ālā* bless you for He has enabled you to undertake a major task. May Allāh *ta'ālā* accept it and reward you abundantly from all of us who benefit from it. You did us all a great favour by diving into the different oceans, bringing forth rare pearls, stringing them into a beautiful necklace, and presenting it to cowardly people like us. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward you with the best rewards, acknowledge your efforts, and accept them.

Muhammad Yūnus
10 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1407 A.H.

Whatever my respected friend wrote about *Aqwāl-e-Salaf* is both concise and comprehensive. It is my heartfelt desire to write a few words about my sincere friend. Hopefully, I will fulfil the right of his love and bond.

The Maulānā was born in Muhammadī Lakhīmpūr in 1355 A.H. corresponding with 1936. His father's name was Maulānā Mustahsan Sāhib *rahimahullāh* who was a close *murīd* of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and used to engage in *dhikr* and *shughl* (remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* and spiritual exercises). He used to live in Hardāspūr but would cross several rivers even during the monsoon season in order to attend the *majlis* of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh*.

Maulānā Muhammad Yūnus Sāhib most probably lived with his father, and used to study under Hadrat in Fatahpūr. We then came to Ilāhābād and the Maulānā got married to the daughter of Sufi ʿAbd ar-Rabb Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, and proceeded to Kaddī, district Mihsānah, Gujarat. He came to Ilāhābād and studied the books of *tafsīr* and Hadīth with us. *Māshā Allāh*, he was an intelligent student, but because of financial constraints, he had to return to Kaddī. He remained there till the end and rendered many religious and academic services.

He showed a lot of love for me. When we established Madrasah Bayt al-Maʿārif, Ilāhābād, we first undertook a journey to Kaddī, Gujarat.

The Maulānā introduced me to a few wealthy people of Mumbai. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

I now relate an incident which demonstrates his good thoughts. I consider it necessary to relate this incident as a way of giving thanks. After the demise of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* I went to Kanthāriyah, Bharūch in 1412 A.H. to establish a *khānqāh* there (and –*al-hamdulillāh* - I still go there. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept it). The following year, Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib *rahimahullāh* passed away. So some people of Pālanpūr, e.g. Maulānā Muftī Ādam Sāhib Bhīlūnī, Ādam Sāhib Kuhlī, Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Rahīm Sāhib and others went to Maulānā Yūnus Sāhib *rahimahullāh* to renew their *bayʿah* or to seek his advice. He spontaneously said to them: "My friend, Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib comes here to Kanthāriyah to conduct a *khānqāh* there. I feel it will be good if you people pledge *bayʿah* to him." (The Maulānā advised them in this manner although his own shaykh, Maulānā ʿAbd al-Halīm Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was still alive, and he himself had received *khilāfat* from him).

Subsequently, those people came to me, established a bond with me, and the relationship increased gradually. Eventually, the majority of the *ʿulamāʾ* of this region entered the *silsilah* (spiritual chain) and have embellished the *khānqāhs* of Kanthāriyah and Ilāhābād with their regular presence. Many of them have also

received *ijāzah* (permission to induct *murīds*) and *khilāfat*.

In short, I had a special relationship with Maulānā Muhammad Yūnus Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. I make an earnest *duʿā'* to Allāh *taʿālā* to bless him with a special rank in Paradise and to accept his services in the fields of *Dīn* and *sulūk*. He passed away in his village Muhammadī Lakhīmpūr in Safar 1427 A.H./2006. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower him with His mercies.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

خير الناس قرني ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم (مسلم، كتاب الفضائل)

THE TĀBIʿĪN

Rahimahumullāh

BIOGRAPHIES AND STATEMENTS

In the first volume we related short biographies and a few statements of some of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum,* Sahābiyāt *radiyallāhu ʿanhunna* and Tābiʿīn. The readers crowned them with the honour of acceptance. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā.*

In volume two, we will relate biographies and statements of a few more Tābiʿīn, Tābiʿāt, Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn and the *Auliyā'* who came after them.

Hadrat Sayyidunā ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿUmar, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Hafs, his father's name was ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān and his mother's name was Umm ʿĀsim. She was the daughter of ʿĀsim, who was the son of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Thus, the blood of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* flows in the veins of Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh*.

He was born in Madīnah in 63 A.H.

He is included among the Tābiʿīn of Madīnah. He narrated Hadīth from ʿAbdullāh ibn Jaʿfar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Sā'ib ibn Yazīd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Sahl ibn Saʿd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 5, p. 114)

We now quote his entire account from the book *Aʿyān al-Hujjāj* written by the great Muhaddith, Hadrat Maulānā Habīb ar-Rahmān Sāhib Aʿzamī *rahimahullāh*.

His lofty conditions

His father, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, was the governor of Egypt. During that time, he was born in the Egyptian village of Halwān. His mother was the granddaughter of Hadrat ʿUmar Fārūq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to say: "From my progeny there will be a person who will fill the world with justice."

Hadrat ʿUmar's *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* prediction was fulfilled when ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* became the caliph.

He memorized the Qur'ān when he was quite young. His father sent him to Madīnah Munawwarah to acquire knowledge and character. He heard Ahādīth from Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, ʿAbdullāh ibn Jaʿfar, Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib, ʿUrwah ibn az-Zubayr and others. He used to frequent ʿUbaydullāh ibn ʿAbdillāh for the acquisition of knowledge.

When his father passed away in 85 A.H., his uncle, ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān (the famous Umawī caliph) called him to Damascus and got him married to his daughter, Fātimah. Walīd became the caliph in 86 A.H. and sent him to Madīnah Munawwarah as its governor. He remained in this position until 93 A.H. and proceeded to Shām (Syria). Sulaymān became the caliph in 96 A.H. and ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz remained his minister until the end. When the time for Sulaymān's departure from this world drew near, he appointed ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz as the next caliph.

He possessed the qualities of rectitude and piety even before he became the caliph. Those who were jealous of him could find no way of accusing him of living a life of luxury and comfort, or that he was proud and haughty. After he became the caliph, his friends and foes – all of them – acknowledged that after the Khulafā' Rāshidīn,

they never came across any caliph or king who led such an ascetic life as him.

Merits and virtues

With regard to his knowledge and virtues, Maymūn ibn Mihrān says that senior *'ulamā'* appeared to be students of the primary level before him. His adherence to knowledge and practising on it is attested to by a senior *walī*, ardent worshipper and ascetic like Mālik ibn Dīnār *rahimahullāh* who used to say: "People refer to me as an ascetic man, whereas the real ascetic was 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz because the entire world had offered itself to him but he cast it aside." (Ibn Sīrīn)

Imām al-Hudā, Hasan Basrī, and Wahb ibn Munabbih used to refer to him as the Mahdī. Sufyān Thaurī referred to him as the fifth Righteous Caliph. And Imām Mālik referred to him as the *mujaddid* (reviver) of the first century.

He used to say: "I never spoke a lie ever since I learnt that lies create a blot on man's honour."

After he became caliph, he took away all the lands and properties of his family members who had received these from the previous caliphs, and included them in the Bayt al-Māl (Islamic Treasury). In fact, jewellery which was given to his wife by 'Abd al-Malik was also given to the Bayt al-Māl.

The one in-charge of the royal stables came to him asking him for money which would be used for the upkeep of the horses, payment of workers, and purchase of fodder. He said to him: “Send all the horses to the different cities of Syria, sell them, and bring all the money to the Bayt al-Māl. One donkey is sufficient as a conveyance for me.”

On one occasion, his wife sent masoor (a pulse) to his slave, Abū Umayyah, for him to eat. The slave said: “Whenever I come here, I only receive masoor.” The wife replied: “This is the only food which your master, the Amīr al-Mu’minīn, eats.”

He said to his wife (the daughter of the caliph, ʿAbd al-Malik): “If you have one dirham bring it here, and I will buy some grapes.” She replied: “I do not have one dirham.” She then said: “You are the Amīr al-Mu’minīn and you do not even have one dirham to buy grapes!?” He replied: “Yes. But it is easier not to have it than having to wear a necklace of fire in Hell.”

One day he performed the *jumuʿah salāh* while his *kurtah* was patched in the front and back. A man said to him: “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn! If Allāh *taʿālā* has given you, you must dress well.” He lowered his head for a short while and replied: “When Allāh *taʿālā* gives, it is better to show sufficiency at that time. When a person has the power and ability [to exact revenge], it is better to pardon and forgive.”

His daily expense was two dirhams. An estimated value of his *topī* (head gear), turban, *kurtah*, cloak, sheet and leather-socks was only twelve dirhams.

For as long as he was engaged in state work at home at night, he would use the candle which belonged to the state. When he completed his work, he would extinguish the candle, and light the lamp of his house. Rajā' ibn Hayāt was seated by him on one occasion and talking with him when the oil of the lamp got finished and the light was about to go off. Rajā' asked: "Should I awaken the servant?" He replied: "No." Rajā' said: "Okay, shall I put it right?" He replied: "No. It is discourteous for the host to take work from his guest." He then got up himself, poured oil into the lamp, and got it working again. When he completed this task and sat down once more, he said: "When I got up to do this work, I was 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, and I am still 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz [after doing it. Getting up to do my own work did not decrease me in any way]."

While Sulaymān [the caliph] was alive, Abū Bakr ibn Hazm, a judge of Madīnah, sent a request to him saying: "There is an amount set aside for the government employees for candles which they light when they go for the *fajr* and *'ishā salāhs*. The amount is depleted, so please reissue the order." Before the order could be issued, Sulaymān passed away. It was therefore presented to Hadrat 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz *rahimahullāh*. On reading the request, he said:

> "When I had seen you, you used to come to the musjid in the darkness of the night even when it was raining and muddy. By Allāh, you were better on that day than what you are today. Was salām."

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said to ʿAmr ibn Muhājir on one occasion: "When you see me shifting away from the truth, you must hold me by my collar, pull me aside, and say: 'O ʿUmar! What are you doing?'"

Advice to his children

When he was in his final illness, Maslamah ibn ʿAbd al-Malik came to him and said: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! You did not give any of this wealth to your children, and you are departing by leaving them absolute paupers!? You should therefore make a bequest to me or to anyone else in your family in their favour."

He replied: "I did not deprive them any of their rights, and I certainly did not give them what was not their right. As for a bequest, my executor and their guardian on my behalf is Allāh *taʿālā* who revealed the Qur'ān. He alone is the guardian of the righteous."

He then summoned for his children and said to them while his eyes were filled with tears: "May my life be sacrificed for those young people whom I am leaving behind in a state of poverty. All thanks to Allāh *taʿālā* I am leaving them in a good situation. My sons! There could have been only

two situations: (1) That you lived a life of affluence, comfort and luxury; and your father would be in Hell. (2) You lived a life of poverty and need; and your father would be in Paradise. I preferred the second option. You may go. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect you."

He used to say: "We must choose an opinion which is attested to by the past peoples (the senior Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*). Do not accept an opinion which is not in line with their thinking. This is because they were better than you and more knowledgeable than you."

He said the following in one of his sermons: "*Dīn* is what Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* did and the path which was paved by Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. This is what we have to choose. We must stop at this point and not go beyond it."

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* performed hajj in 87 A.H. when he was the governor of Madīnah. He was appointed the *amīr* of the hajj season. He led the life of royalty at the time. Yūnus relates: "I saw him performing *tawāf* and I remember seeing the belt which is tied around the waist covered by rolls of his stomach. I then saw him after he became caliph, and he was so thin that I could count his ribs without having to touch them."

Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik performed hajj in 97 A.H. and ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz accompanied

him. This is affirmed by the above-mentioned incidents related by Sulaymān and Ṯā'ūs. Imām Ṯā'ūs considered 'Umar's walk to be one of pride and haughtiness. So he poked him with his finger in his side and said: "The person whose stomach is filled with impurity must not walk in this manner."

Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam and Ibn al-Jauzī have written entire biographies about him, and several books in the Urdu language have also been written in this regard. (*A'yān al-Ḥujjāj*, p. 213)

The essence of his life

The essence of his life, the soul of all his efforts and striving, and the impetus for all this was the strength of his *īmān*, conviction in the Hereafter, and desire for Paradise. Whatever he did was done out of Allāh's fear and desire for His pleasure. It was this strength which enabled the most powerful ruler of his time ruling over the largest country of the time to remain steadfast against all the attractions and means which were at his disposal. If anyone advised him against such an ascetic life and encouraged him to enjoy the comforts of this world, he would always read this verse to the person:

إِنِّيْ أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّيْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ

"I fear the punishment of a mighty day if I were to disobey my Lord." (Sūrah al-An'ām, 6: 15)

He said to his attendant on one occasion – and this was a correct assessment of his self – "Allāh *taʿālā* bestowed me with a very enthusiastic temperament. No matter what position I acquired, I always desired to get a position higher than it. I have now reached a position after which there is nothing. My enthusiastic temperament is now yearning for and desiring Paradise." (*Sīrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz*, p. 61)

The level of his soft heartedness and submission before Allāh *taʿālā* can be gauged from the following: He asked a person for advice. The man replied: "If Allāh *taʿālā* cast you into Hell and the entire world entered Paradise, what benefit will it be to you? If the entire world went to Hell and Allāh *taʿālā* blessed you with Paradise, of what harm will it be to you?" On hearing this, he cried so much that a stove which was in front of him became extinguished. (*Sīrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz*, p. 108)

Yazīd ibn Haushab says: "It seemed as though Paradise and Hell were created only for ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Hasan Basrī." (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 3, p. 165)

Demise

Had Allāh *taʿālā* willed and ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was blessed with a longer period as caliph, he would have effected a deep and long lasting revolution in the entire Islamic world, and Muslim history would have been different from what it is.

But the Banū Umayyah who had to make the most sacrifices during the era of his caliphate, and regretted at having a relationship with him because they could no longer conduct their informal assemblies, could not bear this any more. The tried to get rid off him as quickly as possible and thus deprived the Muslim world of this gift of Allāh *taʿālā*. He ruled as caliph for two years and five months, and passed away in 101 A.H. There is evidence to suggest that he was poisoned by his family members. (Refer to Ibn Saʿd, Ibn Athīr, Ibn Jauzī, and *Tārīkh Daʿwat wa ʿAzīmat*, vol. 1, p. 50).

He was buried in Diyar Samʿān. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 377)

Hadrat 'Alqamah ibn Qays *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is 'Alqamah, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Shiblī. He was the maternal uncle of the famous Muhaddith, Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī *rahimahullāh*, and the paternal uncle of Aswad ibn Yazīd *rahimahullāh*.

He was born during the blessed era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

Statements and conditions

He was an illustrious student of Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. He possessed exceptional knowledge and virtue to the extent that many Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* would ask him for *fatāwā* and points of knowledge.

He disliked popularity and tribute for himself. People would advise him to go to one of the renowned places and conduct lessons of Hadīth and Qur'ān. He would reply: "I dislike a large group of people walking behind me, and people pointing fingers at me and saying: 'This is 'Alqamah'."

Someone said to him: "You would benefit [materially] if you go and meet the rulers of the time." He replied: "The more of the world I take from them, the more of the *Dīn* they will take away from me."

Note: There is a special lesson in this for the *'ulamā'* and *mashā'ikh*. Remaining in the company of the rulers and leaders without any real need certainly destroys one's internal self. When a Tābiʿī who is a distinguished personality of the *khayr al-qurūn* (best of eras) is so wary of joining the rulers and leaders, how much more will we – who are deficient in knowledge and practice – have to be on our guard in this regard!

He used to remain in his house, and would personally see to providing grass and other necessities to his goats.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the level of his humility and selflessness! This is also in emulation of the Sunnah. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* also conducted himself in this way in his house – as mentioned in the books on his biography.

He would marry the daughters of poor people with the intention of humbling himself.

When he passed away, he left behind nothing except for a sheet, a tattered blanket, and a copy of the Qur'ān.

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is what you call genuine Sufism and asceticism for which thousands of *karāmāt* (miracles) can be sacrificed. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 25)

Resemblance with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*

Hadrat Ibrāhīm *rahimahullāh* says that Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* resembled Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in his ways, mannerisms, habits and traits. And Hadrat ʿAlqamah *rahimahullāh* resembled Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. This resemblance was not confined to knowledge only. Rather, he resembled him totally in actions and situations.

Recitation of the Qur'ān

He had extraordinary attachment to the Qur'ān. He used to complete one recitation of the Qur'ān in six days. At times, he would read the entire Qur'ān in one night.

Note: This virtue cannot be acquired without a special affinity (*nisbat*) with Allāh *taʿālā* and a unique bond with the Book of Allāh *taʿālā*. Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *rahimahullāh* says: "Who is it who made us listen to the eternal song and thereby left us intoxicated and enraptured!?"

Demise

He passed away in 62 A.H. in Kūfah. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. He issued three bequests when he was ill: (1) Read the *kalimah tayyibah* to me until the very end so that the last words to emanate from my mouth are *Lā ilāha illallāhu wahdahu lā sharīka lahu*. (2) Hasten in

my burial. (3) Women must not join my funeral. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 398)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent bequest and advice. It is most worthy of practising upon.

Hadrat Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, merits

His name is Muhammad, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh. His father's name was Munkadir. He held a lofty position as regards merits, virtues, asceticism and piety. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* says that his reliability, and academic and practical excellences were unanimously accepted. He adds the titles of "Imām" and "Shaykh al-Islam" to his name. He was a distinguished reader of the Qur'ān. Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* used to refer to him as *sayyid al-qurrā'* (the master of all the readers of the Qur'ān). He also possessed expertise in the field of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *fatwā*. He was listed among the muftīs of Madīnah Munawwarah.

Asceticism and abstention

Asceticism and piety were deeply seated in him. He used to undertake strenuous spiritual exercises for the rectification of his self. He bore every type of hardship for forty continuous years for his self (*nafs*). Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* used to say: "He was from among the most ardent worshippers and ascetics." Ibn ʿImād Hambalī *rahimahullāh* writes: "His house was a refuge and treasure house for the righteous (*sulahā'*) and ardent worshippers."

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Soft heartedness

His heart was extremely soft and he would tear profusely when reading certain verses of the Qur'ān. He cried excessively one night in the *tahajjud salāh*. When his brothers asked him the reason the next morning, they learnt that he was overcome by crying when he read this verse:

وَبَدَا لَهُمْ مِّنَ اللهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُوْنُوْا يَحْتَسِبُوْنَ

"And there will appear before them, from Allāh, what they did not even imagine." (Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 47)

He was affected in a similar way when he read Ahādīth. Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* says: "When he was asked about a certain Hadīth, he would cry."

Benefiting from the company of the righteous

Just looking at him would rectify a person's *nafs*. Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* says: "Whenever I perceived any hardness in my heart, I would go and look at Ibn Munkadir. This would result in my abhorring my *nafs* for a few days."

The best deed and the best world

Someone asked him: "What do you consider to be the most superior thing?" He replied: "To bring joy to Muslims." He was asked: "What is the best of this world: "To treat one's friends in a noble manner." (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 494)

Statements

1. He used to say: "I imposed striving and spiritual exercises on my *nafs* for forty years. Only then did I obtain an inkling of the pious predecessors."

Note: We learn from this that after striving and engaging in spiritual exercises, a person develops the qualities of the pious.

2. He used to take children with him for hajj and explained this as follows: "I present them before Allāh *taʿālā* in the hope that He will look at them with mercy (and I will also obtain some of it)."

3. He used to say: "I feel ashamed of thinking that Allāh's mercy cannot be showered on a certain Muslim, no matter how evil his deeds may be."

Note: We learn from this that we must set our sights on Allāh's *taʿālā* all-encompassing mercy so that we may hope for His mercy under every situation.

Demise

He passed away in Madīnah Munawwarah in 130 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 33)

Hadrat Sayyidunā Muhammad ibn Kaʿb *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Hamzah. His father's name was Kaʿb. His father was a confederate of the Jewish tribe, Banū Qurayzah, and the Aus tribe of the Ansār. He [the son] was captured in the battle of Qurayzah but was released because of his tender age.

Merits

Muhammad ibn Kaʿb was a senior and high-ranking Tābiʿī. Ibn Hibbān *rahimahullāh* says that he was from among the distinguished *ʿulamā'* of Madīnah in knowledge and jurisprudence.

Pondering and reflecting over the Qur'ān

Pondering and reflecting over the meanings of the Qur'ān was his peculiar trait. One night he began reading Sūrahs Zilzāl and al-Qāriʿah. He spent the entire night pondering over their meanings and implications, and continued until the morning.

He used to say: "A deluge and flood of meanings of the Qur'ān come into my mind to the extent that the entire night passes, but the flood of meanings does not stop.

Jurisprudence

He was from among the illustrious jurists of Madīnah.

كَانَ مِنْ أَفَاضِلِ أَهْلِ الْمَدِيْنَةِ عِلْمًا وَفِقْهًا

"He was from among the distinguished people of Madīnah in knowledge and jurisprudence."

He was also imbued with asceticism and abstention.

Purity of heart

He remained pure of heart in every stage of his life. In addition to this, he would always remain occupied in making *duʿā'* for forgiveness and repentance. On seeing this, his mother would say to him: "O Muhammad! Had your life of piety not been fully known to me, I would have thought your crying by day and night, and your repentance and seeking forgiveness were all because of a very serious sin which you committed. But I found you to be pure of heart in your childhood, and I see you the same even now after you have become an adult."

Muhammad ibn Kaʿb *rahimahullāh* said: "O mother! You may be right in what you are saying, but I do not consider myself safe from sin. I may have committed an error which caused Allāh's *taʿālā* anger and displeasure. This is why I seek forgiveness all the time." (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 6, p. 267)

Statements

1. “The one who reads the Qur’ān will certainly be endowed with intelligence even if he has reached the age of one hundred years.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What glad tidings for those who read the Qur’ān. May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow all of us with genuine recitation of the Qur’ān. Āmīn.

2. “The earth cries over some people, and for some people. The earth cries for those who do good and it makes *duʿā’* for them. As for those who commit evil, the earth cries over them and curses them. He then recited this verse:

فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّمَاءُ وَالأَرْضُ

“Then neither did the skies nor the earth cry over them.” (Sūrah ad-Dukhān, 44: 29)

Crying refers to fellow-feeling and testimony. On the day of Resurrection, testimony will be taken from every single thing with regard to our deeds.

3. He was asked: “What is the sign of loss and deprivation?” He replied: “To consider good to be evil, and evil to be good.”

4. He used to say: “If concession could have been given to abandon *dhikr*, Hadrat Zakarīyyā *ʿalayhis salām* would have been the first to be given such a concession (because Allāh *taʿālā* had prohibited him from speaking for three days, but at the same time, he was ordered to engage in

abundant remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*). Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اٰيَتُكَ أَلاَّ تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلاَثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلاَّ رَمْزًا، وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ كَثِيْرًا

"The sign for you is that you will not speak with people for three days except through gestures. And remember your Sustainer abundantly." (Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 41)

He then said: "The *mujāhidīn* in Allāh's cause could have been given a concession from it, but Allāh *taʿālā* said with regard to them:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْآ إِذَا لَقِيْتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُوْا وَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا

"O believers! When you encounter any army, stand firm and remember Allāh abundantly." (Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 45)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the excellent words of wisdom uttered by our pious elders. These are from Allāh *taʿālā* and the fruits of their obedience to Him and striving for Him.

5. "When Allāh *taʿālā* wills good for a person, He creates three qualities inside him: (1) a deep understanding of *Dīn*, (2) abstinence from the world, (3) an insightful eye to observe one's own faults."

Note: Hadrat Murshidī Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* describes the opening of the eyes for good as follows:

"Once our insightful eyes opened [and we observed our own faults], we automatically considered ourselves to be worthless."

6. "Wisdom never enters the heart which is determined to commit an act of disobedience."

Note: Just ponder! He is not talking about disobedience, but just thinking of committing an act of disobedience prevents one from receiving wisdom. How, then, can wisdom be possible in the presence of sins?!

7. "Be cautious of befriending too many people because you will not be able to fulfil all their rights. By Allāh, I cannot even fulfil the rights of just one friend." (*Ṯabaqāt*)

Note: This is very important. Unfortunately, today not only do we try to befriend as many people as possible, we fight to do it even if we cannot fulfil the rights of just one.

Demise

He passed away in 108 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Siyar Saḫābah*, vol. 6, p. 270). The *Ṯabaqāt* states that he passed away in 140 A.H. (*Ṯabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 33)

Hadrat ʻUbayd ibn ʻUmayr *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʻUbayd, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʻĀsim Makkī. His father's name is ʻUmayr. He was a senior lecturer and *mufassir* (commentator of the Qur'ān) of his time. He was born during the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʻalayhi wa sallam* but did not have the honour of meeting him.

Study of Hadīth

He narrated Ahādīth from his father, from Hadrat ʻUmar *radiyallāhu ʻanhu*, Hadrat ʻAlī *radiyallāhu ʻanhu*, Hadrat Abū Dharr Ghifārī *radiyallāhu ʻanhu*, Umm al-Mu'minīn Hadrat ʻĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʻanhā*, and others.

Merits

He is from among the reliable and trustworthy Tābiʻīn and one of the imāms of Makkah. Hadrat Ibn ʻUmar *radiyallāhu ʻanhu* used to attend his assemblies of admonition and advice.

Abū Bakr ibn ʻAyāsh narrates from ʻAbd al-Malik, and he from ʻAtā' who said: "'Ubayd and I went to Umm al-Mu'minīn ʻĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʻanhā* so she said to ʻUbayd: 'You must shorten your reminding and discussing.' He considered this to refer to his lectures. In other words, when you admonish and advise, you must be concise [do

not prolong it].” (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 4, p. 156)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What beneficial advice! People become bored when a lecture is too long, and this causes harm to the *Dīn*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself was in the habit of delivering short and concise talks. And he would choose appropriate times to deliver these talks. Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to say:

كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يتخولنا بها مخافة السامة علينا (مشكوة، كتاب العلم).

“Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam used to advise us with pauses in-between out of fear that we might become bored.”

A strange incident

A very beautiful and attractive woman who was conscious of her beauty came to him on one occasion with the intention of putting him through a tribulation (*fitnah*) as regards his *Dīn* and righteousness. Instead, ʿUbayd ibn ʿUmayr *rahimahullāh* removed her from her attempt and converted her into a righteous woman. He enumerated Allāh’s *taʿālā* favours to her – especially with regard to her beauty – and turned her towards Allāh *taʿālā*.

ʿAjalī relates in his book, *ath-Thiqāt* (vol. 2, p. 119): “My father, ʿAbdullāh, related to me that

there was an attractive married woman in Makkah Muʿazzamah. She looked at her self in the mirror one day and said to her husband: 'Is it possible for a man to see this face and not be tempted?' Her husband replied: 'Yes.' She asked: 'Who?' Her husband said: "Ubayd ibn 'Umayr.' She said: 'Permit me to go and tempt him.' Her husband said: 'You have my permission.'"

"The woman went to 'Ubayd and asked him a ruling (*mas'alah*). She took him to one corner of Musjid-e-Harām." The narrator continues: "She then uncovered her face which looked like it was a piece of the moon. He said to the woman: 'O slave of Allāh! Fear Allāh.' She said: 'I have fallen in love with you. You should think about this matter with me.' He said: 'Let me ask you a few questions. If you answer me truthfully, I will think about your proposition.' She said: 'I will give you a correct answer to every question of yours.'"

'Ubayd asked: "If the angel of death came to take away your soul, will you be happy that I fulfil your need?"

She replied: "By Allāh, no."

'Ubayd asked: "You have spoken the truth. When people are given the book of deeds and you do not know whether you will receive it in your right hand or left hand, would you want me to fulfil your need in such a condition?"

She replied: “By Allāh, no.”

ʿUbayd said: “You have spoken the truth. If you are about to cross the *Sirāṯ* (the bridge over Hell), and you do not know whether you will cross safely or not, would you want me to fulfil your need in such a condition?”

She replied: “By Allāh, no.”

ʿUbayd said: “You have spoken the truth. When the scale is brought forward for the weighing of your deeds and you do not know whether your deeds will be weighty or not, would it please you if I were to fulfil your need in such a condition?”

She replied: “By Allāh, no.”

ʿUbayd said: “You have spoken the truth. When you are made to stand before Allāh *taʿālā* for questioning, would you want me to fulfil your need at such a time?”

She replied: “By Allāh, no.”

ʿUbayd said: “You have spoken the truth.” He then said: “O slave of Allāh! Fear Allāh. Allāh *taʿālā* has been kind to you and bestowed His favours on you.”

She returned to her husband who asked her: “What happened?”

She replied: “You are a useless man, and we are all useless.”

She then became engrossed in salāh, fasting and other acts of worship. Her husband used to say: "What did I have to do with 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr? He spoilt my wife and left her. Previously, I used to be like a groom every night, and he has now converted her into a monk!"

A person rightly said:

ما الكيميا قلب الحجارة فضة – بل أن تزيل الظلمة الأنوار

"Alchemy does not involve converting a rock into silver. Rather, true alchemy involves getting rid of darkness with light." (Nasīhatul Muslimīn, p. 358; Risālatur Mustarshidīn)

Statements

1. "The genuineness of a person's *īmān* involves his performing a complete and perfect *wudū'* despite the inconvenience of the night."

2. "A sign of sincerity is that a person does not hanker after people, and he does not desire their praise."

3. "A person will be a student when he abandons personal desires. And he will be a teacher when he teaches people things which cause them to be hopeful of salvation." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 33)

Demise

He passed away in 74 A.H. (*Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 4, p. 156). The book, *Risālatur*

Mustarshidīn states that he passed away in 68 A.H.

Hadrat ʿAtā' ibn Abī Rabāh *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAtā', his father's name is Aslam, and his father's *kunnīyyat* is Abū Rabāh. He was known by this *kunnīyyat*. ʿAtā' *rahimahullāh* was given the titles of Imām, Shaykh al-Islam, and Muftī-e-Haram. He was from those Tābiʿīn who used to issue *fatāwā*.

He was born in the era of the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

Education

He was proficient in the Qur'ān, Hadīth, jurisprudence – in fact, all the sciences of Islam. He used to deliver Qur'ān lessons.

He is listed among the *huffāz* of Hadīth. He studied Hadīth under several Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. He was most respectful of the Hadīth and would not tolerate anyone speaking while a Hadīth was read. Muʿādh ibn Saʿd al-Aʿwar relates: "We were with ʿAtā' on one occasion when a person related a Hadīth. Another man said something in-between. Hadrat ʿAtā' became very angry and asked: 'What type of character is this? What type of temperament is this? By Allāh, a person relates a Hadīth so that we may acquire some knowledge from it."

Asceticism and piety

His vast knowledge was matched by good deeds. He was a distinguished person from the Tābiʿīn as regards his asceticism and abstention. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* says: "There are many merits with regard to the knowledge, asceticism and Allāh-consciousness of ʿAtā'." ʿAbd ar-Rahmān said: "The *īmān* of all the people of Makkah could not equal the *īmān* of ʿAtā'."

Merits and virtues

Khālid ibn Abū Nauf relates from ʿAtā' who said that he saw 200 Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. He was a senior imām of *fiqh* and Hadīth. Hadrat Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* is one of his students.

Hadrat ʿAtā's mother relates that she saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream and he said to her: "'Atā' ibn Abī Rabāh is the chief of the Muslims."

Hadrat Abū Jaʿfar said: "There is no one in the world who knows about the rites of hajj better than ʿAtā'."

Abū Hāzim Aʿraj said: "'Atā' surpassed everyone in Makkah in issuing *fatāwā*."

Muhammad ibn ʿAbdillāh Dībāj said: "I have not seen a better muftī than ʿAtā'. His assembly used to be filled with the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*, and there was no deficiency in it. When he spoke or

was asked a question, he would give an excellent and appropriate reply."

The nature of his salāh

Ibn Jurayj said: "The bedding of ʿAṯā' ibn Abī Rabāh remained in the musjid for twenty years, and he used to perform his salāh in the best manner."

Ibn Jurayj narrates: "I remained with ʿAṯā' ibn Abī Rabāh for eighteen years when he became old and weak. When he stood up for salāh, he would read 200 verses of Sūrah al-Baqarah. He would perform the whole salāh while standing, without forgetting anything, and without any movement." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 5, p. 78)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how much our elders strove and what perfect worship they did! This ought to make us envious. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us all to carry out perfect and enjoyable worship like theirs, and accept it from us. Āmīn.

Character

If a person related a Hadīth to him which he already knew, he would still listen to it attentively as though he was hearing it for the first time. He used to do this so as not to embarrass the person.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What great character! He displayed ignorance out of consideration to others.

Statements

1. When any person sought permission to come to him, he would not open the door until he asked the person the intention behind his coming. If the person said: "I have come to visit you", he would reply: "A person like me does not deserve to be visited." He would then say: "Look at how bad the times have become that a person like me is visited!?"

Note: This shows his humility and servitude, despite being a Tābiʿī, and a pious personality who engaged in abundant worship. On the other hand, people today consider themselves to be deserving of visits. But there are a few exceptions in this regard.

2. "When a person joins just one assembly (*majlis*) of *dhikr*, Allāh *taʿālā* makes it an atonement for ten assemblies of falsehood."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at Allāh's affectionate mercy. It proves the virtue of the assemblies of *dhikr*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* referred to an assembly of *dhikr* as a grazing field of Paradise.

3. Just ponder! Hadrat ʿAtā' *rahimahullāh* was an Abyssinian slave but he used to teach knowledge to the seniors. Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik came to him and sat down in front of him. So ʿAtā' taught him the rites (*manāsik*) of hajj. Sulaymān then turned to his children and said: "Seek

knowledge because I can never forget the humiliation of sitting before this black slave."

Note: Without doubt, knowledge of the Sharīʿah is superior to wealth, authority and everything else. This was acknowledged by the rulers of the past.

Demise

Hadrat ʿAtā *rahimahullāh* performed hajj sixty times. He passed away in Makkah in 115 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 34)

Hadrat ʿIkramah *maulā* Ibn ʿAbbās *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

Hadrat ʿIkramah *rahimahullāh* was a Berber and a slave of Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

Merit and virtue

Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* refers to him as a senior *ʿālim*. Let alone from among the slaves, even from among the noblemen there was no one who could compare with him. He enjoyed a leading position in the sciences of *tafsīr*, Hadīth, *fiqh* and other branches of knowledge. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 304)

Hadrat Maulānā Habīb ar-Rahmān Aʿzamī *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was an imām in the fields of *tafsīr, maghāzī* (battles), and *fiqh*. He was the most knowledgeable, not only from among Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās's slaves, but even from his students. He had over 300 students, seventy of whom were excellent Tābiʿīs. He performed hajj with Hadrat Husayn *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, the beloved grandson of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*." (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 85)

Tafsīr

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was one of the most senior from among the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* in the field of *tafsīr*

and very few could compare with him. He paid particular attention to teaching *tafsīr* to ʿIkramah and conveyed all his knowledge into his bosom. None of Ibn ʿAbbās's *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* students could compare with him in the science of *tafsīr*.

Hadrat ʿAbbās ibn Musʿab Marwazī *rahimahullāh* said: "Hadrat ʿIkramah was the most senior *ʿālim* from among the students of Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*." Hadrat Qatādah *rahimahullāh* used to say: "The most knowledgeable Tābiʿīn are four: ʿAtā', Saʿīd, Ibn Jubayr, and ʿIkramah. And ʿIkramah was the most senior of these four in the field of *tafsīr*."

Imām Shaʿbī *rahimahullāh* used to say: "Now there is no one more knowledgeable with regard to the Qur'ān than ʿIkramah. Hadrat Hasan Basrī *rahimahullāh* did not deliver *tafsīr* lessons in Basra for as long as ʿIkramah was in the city."

ʿIkramah had become a senior *mufassir* (scholar of *tafsīr*) while Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was still alive. Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* would test him occasionally and would be most pleased by his scholarly answers. On one occasion, Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* read the following verse:

لِمَ تَعِظُوْنَ قَوْمًا نِ اللّٰهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيْدًا

"Why do you admonish a people whom Allāh wills to destroy or inflict with a severe punishment?" (Sūrah al-Aʿrāf, 7: 164)

After reading this verse, Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "I do not know if the people who are referred to in this verse were saved or destroyed." Hadrat ʿIkramah *rahimahullāh* proved after a very clear and lucid explanation that they were saved. Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was very pleased with his explanation and made him wear a garment [as a way of honouring him]. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 305)

Note: The above verse refers to the people of the Banī Isrā'il whom Allāh *taʿālā* prohibited from fishing on Saturdays. Some people broke Allāh's prohibition by resorting to certain schemes. The Banī Isrā'īl became divided into different groups over this issue, as explained by ʿAllāmah Shabbīr Ahmad ʿUthmānī *rahimahullāh*:

> "It appears that when they began resorting to tricks against the injunctions of Allāh *taʿālā*, the inhabitants of the town became divided into several groups as normally happens in such situations. One group openly transgressed the order of Allāh *taʿālā* by resorting to tricks and stratagems. Another group comprised of well-wishers who advised and admonished them till the very end. A third group advised them once or twice and eventually got tired of their obstinacy. A fourth group is probably the one which neither joined them in this vile act nor prohibited them. This group merely remained silent. The latter two groups probably said the following to the second

group: 'Why are you racking your brains over these obstinate persons of whom there is no hope whatsoever that they would submit to the truth? It is obvious that one of the following two shall certainly befall them: Allāh *taʿālā* will either completely destroy and annihilate them or inflict a severe punishment upon them.'"[1]

A source for students of Hadīth

He was a source of reference for many people. Students of Hadīth used to come to him from far and wide. No matter where he went, he was inundated by crowds of people [eager to learn from him]. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 306)

Statements

He used to say: "The person who reads Sūrah Yāsīn in the morning will remain hale and hearty until the evening." (*Tabaqāt*)

Demise

There are different narrations with regard to the year of his demise. Some narrations state that he passed away in 106 A.H. or 107 A.H. in Madīnah. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 306) According to the *Tabaqāt*, he passed away at the age of 83 in 102 A.H. while he was in *sajdah* (prostration). May

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[1] *Tafsīr-e-ʿUthmānī*, vol. 3, p. 251 (Madrasah Arabia Islamia, Azaadville translation)

Allāh shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 34)

Hadrat Tā'ūs ibn Kīsān al-Yamānī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Tā'ūs, his *kunnīyyat* is 'Abd ar-Rahmān. He was a slave of Bahrayn Rīsān Himyarī. His father was a non-Arab.

Merits and virtues

He is listed from among the senior Tābi'īn as regards his merits and virtues. His high level of knowledge was accompanied with practice. Ibn Hibbān *rahimahullāh* said: "He was from among the ardent worshippers from Yemen. The mark of prostration was clearly seen on his forehead due to excessive worship. He would stand and perform salāh even when he was on his death-bed."

He had no inclination whatsoever to the world and its attractions. He never desired any worldly comforts.

Rectification of the youth

He strictly disliked the sharp appearances, styles and mannerisms of the youth. On one occasion he reprimanded some youth of the Quraysh who were fancily dressed while they were performing *tawāf*. He said to them: "You are wearing clothes which your pious elders never wore, and you are walking in manner which is not even adopted by dancing women." (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 229)

Note: If this was the condition of the youth of the *khayr al-qurūn* (best of eras), then no matter what the condition of the youth of the *sharr al-qurūn* (worst of eras) is, it will be less. In fact, no one can even tell them anything. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Merits

He would lose his senses whenever he saw a fire [because it reminded him of the Hell-fire]. He would not give water to his animals from a well which was dug by the rulers. He performed the *fajr salāh* with the *wudū'* of *ʿishā* for forty years.

Note: Many pious elders are affirmed to have done this. So it is neither surprising nor far-fetched.

He would state the truth frankly to the governors and to others without fearing any criticism from anyone. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 34)

Statements

1. "If only you acquired knowledge for your *nafs* because people no longer possess the qualities of trustworthiness and practising on knowledge."

2. "The most superior worship is the one which is most concealed."

Demise

He used to perform hajj a lot and this continued till the end of his life. Allāh *taʿālā* showered his enthusiasm for hajj with the crown of acceptance.

Consequently, he passed away in 106 A.H. in Makkah, during the hajj season, one day before *yaum at-tarwiyah* (8th of Dhū al-Hijjah). In this way, he became an eternal resident [of Makkah]. The hajj crowds were very large and it was difficult to carry his *janāzah*. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 229)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Wahb ibn Munabbih *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Wahb, his father's name is Munabbih, and his grandfather's name is Kāmil. His *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh.

Birth, merits and virtues

He was born in 34 A.H. during the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

ʿAjalī said: "He is a Tābiʿī, a reliable narrator, and was a judge. Wahb ibn Munabbih did not sleep on a bed for forty years."

Words of advice

1. He said: "Safeguard yourself against three things: (1) an evil desire which is obeyed, (2) evil company, (3) self-conceitedness."

2. "A believer observes in order to learn, speaks in order to understand, is silent in order to remain safe, and remains in solitude in order to acquire [knowledge and cognition]."

3. "If a person possesses three qualities, he will acquire good: (1) to be generous with people, (2) to be patient when harmed by anyone, (3) to speak cordially with people."

4. "When you hear someone praising you for qualities which you do not possess, do not feel

safe because on another occasion he will criticize you for [bad] qualities which you do not possess."

Note: Glory to Allāh! These are real words of wisdom and cognition. If a person is in the habit of saying things which are contrary to the facts, he will praise a person when that is not the case. Later when he experiences a situation which is against his temperament, he will not hesitate in speaking against the person and say things which are not factual.

Statements

1. "Glad tidings to the person whose own faults have prevented him from looking at his brother's faults."

2. "Glad tidings to the person who adopts humility although he is not a poor person."

3. "Glad tidings to the person who gives in charity from wealth which he saved without having committed any sin."

Note: In other words, he gave in charity from pure and wholesome wealth which he earned by working.

4. "Glad tidings to the person who remains in the company of those who are learned and forbearing."

5. “Glad tidings to the person who emulates those who are learned, forbearing, and submissive [to Allāh *taʿālā*].”

6. “When a foolish person speaks, his stupidity disgraces him. When he remains silent, his silence humiliates him. When he does a deed, he spoils it. His knowledge is not reliable, and the knowledge of others does not benefit him. His neighbour desires to be separated from him. His companion feels awkward in his presence.”

Note: Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* says about a foolish person: “A foolish person is a means of Allāh’s wrath and anger.”

7. “Hadrat Nūh *ʿalayhis salām* was the most beautiful and handsome man of his time. He used to wear a *burqaʿ* (covering for the face). When he and his people were on the ship, and the people used to feel hungry, he would expose his face to them and their hunger would be satiated.” (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 4, p. 544)

8. “It is stated in the Taurāh that a sign of a righteous man is when his own people are his enemies. The closer in relationship they are to him, the more antagonistic they will be towards him.”

9. “People of the past were leaves with no thorns. But today, you are nothing but thorns. There is no sign whatsoever of any leaves.”

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10. “When a noble person acquires knowledge, he becomes humble. When an ignoble person acquires knowledge, he becomes proud and arrogant.”

11. “If a person does not give any of his wealth to his enemy, he will inevitably have to fight him.”

12. “There is a transgression in knowledge just as there is transgression with wealth.”

Note: A Hadīth states:

إِنَّ لِلْعِلْمِ طُغْيَانًا كَطُغْيَانِ الْمَالِ (مجمع بحار الأنوار، ص٤٥٣)

“There is a transgression in knowledge just as there is transgression with wealth.”

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* used to say: “Transgression refers to considering these bounties [of knowledge and wealth] to be the fruits of one’s own efforts. Transgression of this nature is also found in our worship. That is, a person engages in worship and becomes a victim of self-conceitedness and vanity.”

13. “Have good relations with the poor because they will be the wealthy ones on the day of Resurrection.”

Note: A worldly relationship with these poor people will benefit a person in the Hereafter. Can there be a bounty more beneficial than this?

14. “Allāh *taʿālā* says [in a Hadīth Qudsī]: ‘O man! I have showered so many favours and bounties on you but you do not fulfil the obligation which you owe to Me. I remember you but you forget Me. I am calling you towards Me, but you are fleeing from Me. I am sending down good to you but you are sending up evil to Me.”

Note: This is a very important Hadīth Qudsī which is sufficient for the slaves of Allāh *taʿālā*. If this does not awaken the urge and enthusiasm to practise, whose speech is there which will awaken us!?

15. “In the present times, the *ʿulamā’* are conveying their knowledge to the people of this world so that they may acquire the world from them. This is why they have become despicable in the sight of the worldly people. There is no power and might except with Allāh, the Most High, the Exalted.”

16. “How can a person whose stomach becomes like a valley be abstinent in this world?”

Note: Instead, he will become subject to avarice and greed for wealth, and be destroyed. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

17. “The most serious sin after ascribing partners with Allāh *taʿālā* is to mock at people.”

Note: This is a general malady in today's times. The worldly people make fun of and ridicule those who are religious-minded. How sorrowful!

18. "When a person keeps fast, the light of his eyes is reduced. But when he opens his fast with something sweet, its light is restored."

Note: This is why it is Sunnah to open the fast with dates. This is the minimum benefit of following the Sunnah. As for the benefits in the Hereafter, these cannot be imagined.

19. "When a person engages in worship, his strength is increased. When he acts lazy, his laziness and weakness increases."

Note: This is certainly correct and is experienced quite often.

20. "*Īmān* is unclothed (naked). *Taqwā* (piety) is its garment, and modesty (*hayā'*) is its beautification."

Note: Glory to Allāh! He explained and made clear a spiritual point with a physical example. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him.

Demise

He passed away in Sanʿā' [Yemen] in 114 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 35)

Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Yazīd Taymī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Asmā', and his father's name is Yazīd. He was an ardent worshipper and ascetic Tābiʿī of Kūfah. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 16)

Abstention and worship

He used to be completely engrossed in salāh to the extent that when he used to be in *sajdah* (prostration), birds would sit on his back, and peck at him. He used to keep fasts for two consecutive months at a time. He would confine himself with just one grape a day. Despite all this abstinence and worship, he never considered his deeds to be worthy of consideration. He used to say: "When I compare my deeds to my words, I fear I am a liar." He was a unique example of selflessness and an embodiment of sacrifices. He displayed examples of selflessness and sacrifices which are rare to find. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 17)

Statements

1. "Fear of Allāh *taʿālā* is sufficient to render a person knowledgeable, and haughtiness over one's knowledge is sufficient to render a person ignorant."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the effects and signs of knowledge and ignorance as explained by him. We can gauge our own position in the light of what he said.

2. "Greed has induced us to commit very evil actions."

3. "When you see a person lax in performing salāh with *takbīr-e-tahrīmah* (the first *takbīr* which marks the commencement of salāh), you may wash your hands off him (i.e. do not expect any good from him)."

Demise

He passed away in 92 A.H. while he was imprisoned by Hajjāj. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 36)

Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Yazīd an-Nakha'ī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū 'Imrān, and his father's name was Yazīd.

Merits

He was one of the distinguished Tābi'īn of Kūfah. He was a specialist in the field of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and was considered to be an imām in it. Everyone unanimously accepted his juristical expertise.

Virtuous character

Together with this knowledge, he was endowed with practise and virtuous character.

Worship and striving

He was an ardent worshipper, and a very abstinent and ascetic man. He would engage in worship in the solitude of the night, away from people. Hadrat Talhah *rahimahullāh* relates: "When people used to fall asleep, Ibrāhīm would don a special garment, apply perfume and proceed to the musjid. He would remain their until the morning. He would then remove his special garment and wear an ordinary set of clothes. He would become totally unrecognizable from the effects of worship."

Hadrat Aʿmash *rahimahullāh* relates: "Ibrāhīm would regularly come to us after performing salāh. He would appear to be sick until the day progressed considerably. He was strict in fasting one day and not fasting the next."

Humility and submission

Despite Ibrāhīm's *rahimahullāh* high status, he was always silent, remained in solitude, did not have any airs about himself, and was simple minded. His humbleness was of such a level that he could not even tolerate sitting while leaning on something [because this would give the impression that he had a distinguished position]. He would occasionally carry the burdens of others for the sake of reward [from Allāh *taʿālā*].

Awe

Although he was very humble, people were overawed by him. Hadrat Mughīrah *rahimahullāh* relates: "We used to fear Hadrat Ibrāhīm *rahimahullāh* as we feared kings and rulers." (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 25)

Note: This awe and status were bestowed to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* by Allāh *taʿālā*. When Hadrat Ibrāhīm *rahimahullāh* emulated the outward Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he was blessed with the internal Sunnah of "awe" of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This quality is given to most of the pious elders.

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Statements

1. "If a person asks a sick person, 'How are you?' and he replies: 'I am well', and then describes the pain and discomfort which he is experiencing, then there is no harm in it [in describing it]."

2. "After *īmān*, the most superior deed for a slave of Allāh *taʿālā* is to exercise patience when he is pained."

Note: Glory to Allāh! This proves the virtue of patience.

3. "We have met such people who used to fear making *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān."

4. "If people point to a person [and speak highly of him] with regard to any *Dīnī* or worldly matter, this is sufficient to put him through a tribulation. However, this does not apply to a person whom Allāh *taʿālā* protects and safeguards." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 36)

Demise

He fell ill a few months after the death of Hajjāj. He used to remain restless and trembling till the very end. When people asked him the reason for this, he said: "Can there be a more dangerous time than when a messenger of Allāh *taʿālā* comes with the message of Paradise or Hell? I prefer experiencing this restless condition until the Resurrection to waiting for this message. He passed away in this illness in 96 A.H. There are

different opinions about his age when he died. He was about 49-50 years old, or slightly more. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Ṯaḫābah*, vol. 7, p. 25)

Hadrat ʿAun ibn ʿAbdillāh ibn ʿUtbah *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAun, his father's name is ʿAbdullāh, and his grandfather is ʿUtbah. He was a chief of the ardent servants of Allāh *taʿālā*. He narrated Hadīth from his father, brother, Ibn Musayyib, Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, and ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

Merits

Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh* and others consider him to be a reliable narrator. ʿAlī ibn Madīnī *rahimahullāh* said: "ʿAun performed salāh behind Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*." Asmuʿī *rahimahullāh* said: "He was the most juristically qualified person in Madīnah. He held a lofty position in the sight of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh*. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 5, p. 102)

Statements

1. "Among each person's deeds, there is one deed which is the chief [which one holds in the highest regard]. The chief of my deeds is the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent statement. Allāh *taʿālā* Himself says: "and the *dhikr* of Allāh is the greatest."

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2. “Considering one’s self superior to those who are under one is a sufficient reason for pride.”

3. “Pride was the first sin through which Allāh *taʿālā* was disobeyed. That is, Satan vexed his pride before Allāh *taʿālā*.”

Note: Allāh *taʿālā* says:

أَبَى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِيْنَ

“He [Satan] refused [to prostrate] and vexed pride. And he was of the unbelievers.” (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 34)

4. His companions went into a forest on one occasion and saw him sleeping in the sunlight and heat, but a cloud was shading him. When he got up, he took a promise from them not to mention this to anyone until he dies.

Note: This was a salient feature of our pious elders. Let alone concealing their wonderful conditions, they would even conceal their *karāmāt* (miracles, supernatural feats). We should certainly emulate them.

5. “The assembly of *dhikr* is a polish and cure for the heart.” He would occasionally wear silk brocade, and woollen garments on other occasions. When people asked him the reason for this, he replied: “I wear silk brocade on some occasions so that the wealthy people, rulers, and people of authority would not consider it below their dignity to sit near me. I wear woollen

garments occasionally so that the poor and needy do not become overawed and do not give up sitting in my company."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the wisdom displayed by our pious elders, and the teachings which they left for the succeeding generations so that they can emulate the ways of their pious predecessors.

6. "A person who suspects hypocrisy within himself is definitely not a hypocrite."

Note: This is why the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* feared hypocrisy constantly. The *Iḥyā' al-ʿUlūm* relates from Ibn Abī Mulaykah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* who said: "I met 130 Sahābah – and 150 according to another narration – who feared hypocrisy."

7. When any of his slaves or servants disobeyed him, he would say: "Your condition is the same as your master's." In other words, my relationship with my master [Allāh *taʿālā*] is the same as your relationship with me.

Note: This shows his absolute submission and acknowledgement of his own shortcomings. This is a praiseworthy condition.

8. "One of the signs of perfection of *taqwā* in a person is that he is not satiated with no matter how much knowledge he acquires. A group which abandoned increase in knowledge did so because

it did not benefit from the knowledge which it possessed."

Note: Had they benefited from it, then let alone being satisfied with more, they would have constantly asked Allāh *taʿālā* for more. Allāh *taʿālā* did not instruct His beloved [Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] to ask for anything more except for knowledge. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

رَبِّ زِدْنِيْ عِلْمًا

"Say: O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge."

9. "Had you seen death and the high speed with which it travels, you would have abhorred hopes and deception [with this world]."

Note: You would have abandoned desire for this world and occupied yourself in preparation for the Hereafter.

10. "The person who controls his stomach will be able to control and safeguard all his good deeds." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 36)

Demise

He passed away in 110 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower him with abundant mercy. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*)

Hadrat Mansūr ibn al-Muʿtamir al-Kūfī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Mansūr, his father's name is Muʿtamir, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿIqāb as-Sulamī al-Kūfī. ʿAllāmah Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* enumerates him among the Tābiʿīn. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 5, p. 402)

His salāh

He would stand on the roof of his house at night and perform salāh there. When he passed away, his neighbour's daughter asked her father: "O father! What happened to that pillar which was on our neighbour's roof?" She used to go to her upstairs room at night [and had seen her neighbour who appeared like a pillar on the roof because of his lengthy salāh]. He spent sixty years keeping fast during the day and passing the night in worship.

Crying before Allāh *taʿālā*

He used to spend a major portion of his night crying before Allāh *taʿālā* and this would cause his family members to feel sorry for him. But with the arrival of the morning, he would apply *surmah* (antimony) and oil to his eyes. He would then intermingle with people so that they would assume he had a good night's sleep.

Statements

1. “Assuming we had no sin whatsoever except for love for this world, we would still be eligible for the Hell-fire.”

2. He used to say to the *ʿulamā’*: “You are getting the joy of knowledge by obtaining it and then conveying it to others. Whereas the purpose of knowledge is to practise on it. Had you practised on your knowledge you would have fled from this world because there is nothing in knowledge which would encourage a person to have love for this world.”

Demise

He passed away in 133 A. H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower him with His mercy. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 38; *Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 5, p. 210)

Hadrat Sulaymān ibn Mihrān A'mash *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Sulaymān, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad, but he is popularly known by the title, A'mash. His father's name is Mihrān.

Birth

Hadrat A'mash *rahimahullāh* was born in 61 A.H. on the day when Hadrat Husayn *radiyallāhu 'anhu* was martyred.

Merits

Ibn 'Uyaynah *rahimahullāh* says: "A'mash was a distinguished reader (*qārī*) of the Qur'ān, a great *hāfiz* (memorizer) of Ahādīth, and an expert in the laws of inheritance." He had a special affinity with the Qur'ān.

Narration of Hadīth

He was very cautious in narrating Hadīth. This is why his narrations are considered to be of a high level. People used to refers to him as Sayyidul Muhaddithīn (chief of the Hadīth scholars). He narrated most of his Ahādīth from Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, and then from Hadrat Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Abī Aufā *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. (*Tābi'īn*)

An incident displaying his courage

It is worth relating one story which displays his courage in the presence of rulers.

The caliph, Hishām, wrote to him and instructed him to write on the merits of Hadrat 'Uthmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and the evils of Hadrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. Hadrat A'mash took the letter and fed it to his goat in the presence of the messenger who brought it from the caliph. And he said to him: "This is the reply to the letter." When the messenger insisted on a reply, A'mash wrote the following:

> "*Bismillāhir Rahmānir Rahīm*. If all the good qualities of the entire population of the world were collectively found in Hadrat 'Uthmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, it would not benefit you in any way. If all the evil qualities of the entire population of the world were collectively found in Hadrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu*, it would not harm you in any way. You ought to be concerned about your own *nafs*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a silencing reply he wrote. We ought to bear it in mind because it teaches us to pay particular attention to reforming and rectifying our *nafs*. A poet says:

"Do your own work, do not worry about the work of others." (Be concerned about your own rectification, do not worry about investigating the lives of others).

Generosity

He was very generous by nature. Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh *rahimahullāh* relates: "Whenever we used to go to Aʿmash, he would certainly offer us something or the other to eat." (*Tābiʿīn*)

Statements

1. The authorities and wealthy people appeared to be absolutely insignificant when they sat in his assembly, while he himself was in need of every single piece of bread.

Note: This is certainly the result of *nisbat* (affinity) with Allāh *taʿālā*. On the other hand, many present day *ʿulamā'* incline towards the wealthy.

2. When he used to get up from his sleep and would not find water nearby, he would perform *tayammum* on a wall, and when water was made available to him, he would perform his *wudū'* so that he may protect his purity. He used to say: "I fear passing away without *wudū'* because I do not know the time of death." He did not miss the *takbīr-e-tahrīmah* (first *takbīr* at the commencement of salāh) for approximately seventy years.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his level of practising on *ʿazīmat* (the obligatory ordinances of Allāh *taʿālā*) and constant reflection of death.

3. “Does the person who commits a sin not fear the rising of smoke from the sin and his becoming humiliated and disgraced before people?!”

4. “When evils spread among a nation, evil people are appointed as leaders over them, and these leaders oppress them.”

5. “When I pass away, do not inform anyone. You must take me to my Allāh, and place me in my grave. Do not inform anyone because I am not worthy of having people attending my funeral.” (*Tabaqāt*)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his humility, submission and self-effacement. These qualities are rarely found in our times. I have heard that Hadrat Murshidī Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to read this poem while he was in a similar condition:

“We became disgraced when we died. We should have rather drowned. If I drowned, I would have had no one to carry my funeral bier, nor would I have had a grave [which would have been visited by people].”

Demise

He passed away either in 147 A.H. or 148 A.H. May Allāh show His mercy on him. (Shāh Muʿīn ad-Dīn Ahmad Nadwī: *Tābiʿīn*, p. 29)

Hadrat Mak-hūl ad-Dimashqī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Mak-hūl, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh or Abū Ayyūb, and his father's name was Sihrāb. Hadrat Mak-hūl was a learned Tābiʿī.

Merits

Imām Zuhrī *rahimahullāh* used to say: "There are only three *ʿulamāʾ*." He listed Hadrat Mak-hūl among the three. Ibn Yūnus *rahimahullāh* said: "He was a jurist and an *ʿālim*." He was unanimously accepted as a reliable narrator. He narrated Ahādīth from Hadrat Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Wāthilah ibn Asqaʿ *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Abū Umāmah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Ghanam *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and other Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. Ibn ʿAmmār used to say: "He was an imām of the people of Shām, and enjoyed a distinguished position in the fields of Hadīth and *fiqh*."

Fiqh and fatāwā

Together with memorizing Hadīth, he was an imām and *mujtahid* in *fiqh*. Abū Hātim *rahimahullāh* used to say: "I have not seen a greater jurist than Mak-hūl in Shām." Hadrat Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz considered him to be a greater jurist than Imām Zuhrī *rahimahullāh*. He possessed special expertise and insight in the field of issuing *fatāwā*. Hadrat Saʿīd bin ʿAbd al-

ʿAzīz said: “No one in his era possessed greater insight than him in the field of *fatāwā*. But he was very cautious in issuing *fatāwā*.” Whenever he issued a *fatwā* based on his own opinion, he would clearly state: “I am saying this on the basis of my opinion. It could be right or wrong.”

Written works

The biggest testimony to his juristical expertise is the fact that he wrote two entire books on jurisprudence at a time when writing and compiling books had not even started. Two of his written works are *Kitāb as-Sunan* and *Kitāb al-Masā’il*.

Statements

1. “The person who spends the night in the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā* gets up the next morning as if his mother gave birth to him on that very day.”

2. “If there are fifteen people in this *ummah* who make *istighfār* (seek forgiveness) to Allāh *taʿālā* twenty fives every day, Allāh *taʿālā* will not send an all-encompassing punishment on the *ummah*.”

Note: Every person of this *ummah* can practise on this, regarding which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* gave glad tidings for the Hereafter. He said:

طُوْبَى لِمَنْ وَجَدَ فِيْ صَحِيْفَتِهِ اسْتِغْفَارًا كَثِيْرًا

"Glad tidings to the person who has abundant istighfār in his book of deeds."

3. "The person who has a good fragrance will have more intelligence. The more clothes a person has, the less sorrow and grief he will experience."

Note: He will not be worried all the time about getting them washed. He will be at peace, and will change them whenever he likes.

Demise

According to Ibn Saʿd *rahimahullāh*, he passed away in 112 A.H., 113 A.H. or 118 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 520)

Hadrat Kaʿb Ahbār *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Kaʿb al-Ahbār, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Is-hāq, and his father's name was Māniʿ. He was from the famous Himyar family of Yemen.

Merits

He was a distinguished Jewish scholar and he possessed wide knowledge about the Jewish religion. He was born during the blessed era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, but his seeing Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and meeting him is not established. Narrating Ahādīth from Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Hadrat Suhayb *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* is established.

Statements

1. Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Salām *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked him: "O Kaʿb! Who are the *ʿulamā'*?" He replied: "Those who possess knowledge." He asked: "What will cause knowledge to depart from the hearts of the *ʿulamā'*?" He replied: "Greed, avarice, and mentioning one's needs before people." Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Salām *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "You have encompassed everything." (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 6, p. 266)

Note: How sad! All the above-mentioned evil traits are found in the *ʿulamā'* today. As a result, they are increasingly moving away from true knowledge. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

2. “A person’s praise and admiration only establishes itself in this world when it has already been established in the heavens.”

3. “Illuminate your houses with the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* just as you illuminate your hearts with it.”

Note: We have to pay particular attention to *dhikr*, reading the Qur’ān, salāh, etc. in our homes as well, so that our homes are illuminated with these acts of worship.

4. “The person who will be taken towards Hell will have a black face, chains on his legs, and a shackle around his neck. But the people of this *ummah* will be taken to Hell in their original complexion. Their faces will not be blackened because they prostrated with the same faces when they were in this world.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the honour which is accorded to this *ummah* by virtue of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It will be extremely sad and unfortunate if we still do not send salutations to him and do not follow his Sunnah as a way of showing gratitude to him.

5. “Hadrat Ibrāhīm Khalīlullāh *ʿalayhis salām* was referred to as *Awwāh* because whenever he heard any mention of Hell, he would say: “Āh, the Hell-fire, Āh, the Hell-fire.”

6. “When a person does not engage in any futile conversation from one salāh to the next salāh, the salāh is recorded in the *ʿIllīyyīn*.” (*Tabaqāt*, p. 39)

Demise

He passed away in Shām in 32 A.H. during the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. (*Siyar Sahābah*)

Hadrat Hassān ibn ʿAtīyyah al-Muhāribī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Hassān, and his father's name is ʿAtīyyah. He was a resident of Beirut.

Merits

Auzāʿī *rahimahullāh* said: "I have not seen a person doing more good deeds than Hassān ibn ʿAtīyyah. He was a great jurist and ardent worshipper."

Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* and Yahyā ibn Maʿīn *rahimahullāh* consider him to be a reliable narrator. Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* considers him to be a Tābiʿī. ʿAbd al-Malik Sanʿānī narrates from Auzāʿī *rahimahullāh* who said: "When Hassān would complete the *ʿasr salāh*, he would remain in the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā* until sunset."

He used to make this *duʿā'*:

أَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّيْ أَعُوْذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَتَعَزَّزَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ مَّعْصِيَتِكَ وَأَنْ أَتَزَيَّنَ (لِلنَّاسِ) بِمَا يُشْيِنُنِي عِنْدَكَ.

"O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from getting strength from anything which entails Your disobedience. [I seek refuge in You] from acquiring beautification for the people from anything which is going to cause me to become despicable in Your sight." (Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā', vol. 5, p. 466)

Statements

1. “If a person spends lengthy hours of the night standing in worship before Allāh *taʿālā*, He will make easy for him the long wait on the day of Resurrection. If a person constantly seeks more and more sincerity in his knowledge and deeds, people will become attracted to him by virtue of this.”

2. “Hadrat Ādam *ʿalayhis salām* cried for seventy years when he was taken out of Paradise. He also cried for seventy years over his mistake. When his son was killed, he cried over him for forty years. He resided in Makkah for 100 years.” Allāh knows best. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 39)

Demise

He passed away after 120 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, p. 158)

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Muslim, and his grandfather's name is ʿUbaydullāh. He resided in Shām. He is well known by the name Zuhrī. At times he is attributed to his great-grandfather and referred to as Ibn Shihāb. He is included in the list of junior Tābiʿīn.

Hadīth

Ibn Shihāb Zuhrī *rahimahullāh* studied Hadīth under Hadrat Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Sahl ibn Saʿd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Sā'ib ibn Yazīd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and other Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. He also benefited tremendously from the senior Tābiʿīn.

A narrator says: "There used to be 70-80 *mashā'ikh* in Madīnah Munawwarah, but Ahādīth were not taken from them. But when Zuhrī used to come there, a large crowd of people would assemble around him although he was much younger than those 70-80 elders. (*al-Kifāyah fī ʿilm ar-Riwāyah*, p. 190)

Merits

ʿAmr ibn Dīnār says: "I have not seen a better narrator of Hadīth than Zuhrī."

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* narrates in his *Tārīkh* that Zuhrī memorized the Qur'ān in eighty nights.

In short, Imām Zuhrī *rahimahullāh* was alone considered to be equal to a large group of people as regards his abundant knowledge, merits, memory and acumen. (*Tārīkh Hadīth-e-Muhaddithīn*, p. 225)

Students

He is included in the list of leading imāms of the Hijāz and Shām. Imām Mālik, Imām Auzā'ī, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, 'Atā' ibn Abī Rabāh and others *rahimahumullāh* narrated Ahādīth from him.

Statements

1. Zuhrī says: "I used to serve my teacher and mentor, 'Ubaydullāh ibn 'Utbah, so much, that the slave girl in his house thought that I was a slave. He would ask her: 'Who is waiting at the door?' If she saw me at the door, she would go and tell him: 'Your slave.' I used to carry out all his tasks to the extent of filling water for him."

Note: It was his good fortune for having served his mentor. This is how he reached such a high level. Such service is certainly lacking in our times.

2. "I remained with Sa'īd ibn Musayyib for three days just to learn one Hadīth from him."

3. “When we used to go to study under an *ʿālim*, the mannerisms, and excellent character and habits which we learnt from observing them was considered to be far more valuable to us than the actual knowledge itself.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! We learn the importance of good character. There is a general disregard concerning this.

4. Towards the latter part of his life, some people said to him: “It would be better if you sat in one place in Musjid-e-Nabawī and conducted lessons, advised us, and admonished us.” He replied: “If I did that, people will walk behind me [out of respect for me], and I dislike this.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how much attention he paid to safeguarding himself against egotism and self-conceit.

“And I do not consider it lawful for me to do this until I become totally aloof from this world, and totally desirous for the Hereafter.”

Allāhu akbar! This is a statement coming from a person regarding whom ʿAmr ibn Dīnār *rahimahullāh* used to say: “Dirhams and dīnārs are no more important to him than the droppings of animals.”

Demise

He passed away in 124 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Aʿyān al-Ḫujjāj*, vol. 2, p. 4)

Hadrat Abū ʿUthmān an-Nahdī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, his father's name is Mull, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿUthmān, and he was given the titles of Imām and Shaykh-e-Waqt.

Islam

Abū ʿUthmān embraced Islam during the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and also paid zakāh to Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* zakāh collectors for three years. But he did not have the honour of meeting Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He emigrated to Madīnah during the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

Merits

Abū Qutaybah narrates that Abū Habīb al-Marwazī related to them: "I heard Abū ʿUthmān an-Nahdī saying that he performed hajj on two occasions during the period of *jāhilīyyah* (pre-Islamic era).

Zuhayr ibn Muhammad ibn ʿĀsim narrates from Abū ʿUthmān who said: "I remained in the company of Hadrat Salmān Fārsī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* for twelve years."

Salāh

Muʿtamir narrates from his father who said: "When Abū ʿUthmān an-Nahdī used to perform salāh, he would go into a swoon."

ʿĀsim Ahwal narrates: "Abū ʿUthmān an-Nahdī undoubtedly used to perform 100 rakʿats of salāh between *maghrib* and *ʿishā*."

Abū Hātim said: "He was a reliable narrator and a chief of his people." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 4, p. 175)

Hadīth

He emigrated to Madīnah during the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and heard Ahādīth from Hadrat ʿUmar, Hadrat ʿAlī, Hadrat Ibn Masʿūd and other Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Statements

1. "I know very well when my Allāh thinks of me." He was asked: "How do you know this?" He replied: "Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَاذْكُرُوْنِيْ أَذْكُرْكُمْ

"Remember Me and I will remember you."

"So whenever I remember Him, He will certainly remember me."

2. When he used to see people engaged in *duʿā'*, he would say: "Allāh *taʿālā* has heard us, because He said:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ اُدْعُوْنِيْ اَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

"Your Sustainer said: Call to Me and I will respond to you."

We can gauge the strength of his *īmān* from these two statements.

Demise

He passed away in 100 A.H. at the age of 130. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Bidāyah*, vol. 9, p. 191; *Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 2, p. 6)

Hadrat Farqad as-Sabkhī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Farqad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Yaʿqūb, and his father's name is Yaʿqūb. He was a Tābiʿī who was a very sincere and ardent worshipper.

Statements

1. Hadrat Jaʿfar *rahimahullāh* narrates that Hadrat Farqad as-Sabkhī *rahimahullāh* said: "Make the world into a breast-feeding woman, i.e. make her your foster mother, and make the Hereafter your real mother. Have you not seen how a child remains with his foster mother for as long as she breast-feeds him. Once he grows older and stops drinking her milk, he recognizes his mother. He leaves his foster mother and goes to his real mother. So consider the world to be like a wet-nurse, and the Hereafter to be one's real mother."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent example he used to demonstrate the position and nature of this world and the Hereafter. From this we can gauge how aware these personalities were of the reality of things, and through this, it was easy for them to make us understand the reality of things through examples.

2. "I saw a dream in which a person was calling out: 'O you who are similar to the Jews! Be ashamed before Allāh *taʿālā* because you were not grateful when favours were showered on you, and

you were not patient when you were put through trials and tribulations.'"

3. "An ardent worshipper from the Banī Isrā'īl passed by a mound of sand at a time when the Banī Isrā'īl were starving because of a drought. On seeing this mound of sand, he expressed a wish and said: 'If only this mound of sand was turned into flour so that the Banī Isrā'īl could experience some relief.' Allāh *ta'ālā* sent revelation to the Prophet of the time instructing him to convey this message to the worshipper: 'I have given you the reward of charity equal to a mound of flour merely for making such a wish.'" (*Tabaqāt*, p. 32)

Note: This is what Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* referred to when he said:

نِيَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ

"The intention of a believer is better than his deed."

May my parents be sacrificed for that Pure Being who gives a full reward of a deed merely for intending it. Is there any generous person who does this? If we cannot sacrifice ourselves for such a generous and munificent Being, who else can we do it for?! Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad *rahimahullāh* rightly said:

"Now tell me, who else can I sacrifice myself for? Produce someone like Him if there is anyone like Him!"

Demise

ʿAllāmah Ibn Hajar ʿAsqalānī *rahimahullāh* states the Hadrat Farqad *rahimahullāh* passed away in 131 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*)

Hadrat Māhān ibn Qays al-Hanafī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, his father's name is Qays, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Sālim. Some people say his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Sālih.

Study of Hadīth

Hadrat Māhān Hanafī *rahimahullāh* studied Hadīth under Hadrat ʿAlī, Ibn Masʿūd, and Hadrat Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 3, p. 74)

He used to say: "Do you have no shame that your animals remember Allāh *taʿālā* more than you!?"

He would never get tired of engaging in the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā* by saying *Sub-hānallāh, al-hamdulillāh* and *Lā ilāha illallāh*.

When Hajjāj was about to hang him, he continued in the *dhikr* of *Sub-hānallāh, al-hamdulillāh* and *Lā ilāha illallāh*.

Someone asked him about the deeds of the Sufis, so he said: "Their deeds were few, but their hearts were sound." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 37)

Demise

ʿAllāmah Ibn Hajar ʿAsqalānī *rahimahullāh* says that Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf martyred him in 183 A.H.

May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, p. 518)

Hadrat Rabīʿ ibn al-Hirāsh *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage and merits

His name is Rabīʿ, and his father's name is Hirāsh.

His brother, Ribʿī ibn Hirāsh relates: "We were four brothers, and one of them was Rabīʿ who was very regular with salāh and fasting. We were around him when he passed away. We sent a person to buy his shroud (*kafan*). In the meantime, the cloth which was covering his face slipped off and he said: '*As-salāmu ʿalaykum.*' People said: '*Wa ʿalaykumus salām*, O brother of ʿĪsā *ʿalayhis salām.*' They added in surprise: 'Is it possible for a person to talk after he has passed away?' He replied: 'Yes.' He added: 'I met my Sustainer in a condition in which He is pleased with me. He welcomed me by expressing His pleasure with me. Abul Qāsim Sayyidunā Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is waiting for me. So hasten in performing my *janāzah salāh.*'"

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* narrates this Hadīth:

يَتَكَلَّمُ الرَّجُلُ مِنْ أُمَّتِيْ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ

"A man from my ummah will speak after death." (Hilyah, vol. 4, p. 408; Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā', vol. 4, p. 359)

He used to say: “Try to remain anonymous as far as possible. The world has gone bad, and there is no alternative to saving one’s self from its dangers except through solitude.”

He possessed a lot of wealth but spent it all on his companions. One of his companions relates: “I went to him once and saw him making a dough in a basin, while tears were flowing from his eyes. He was saying: ‘When my wealth got finished, my beloveds wronged and oppressed me.’”

Note: Unfortunately this is happening quite often in our times. At this point, I recall a very wise statement of Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. A person went to him and said: “Hadrat, my heart desires to distribute all my wealth and properties to my children and family while I am alive.” Hadrat asked: “Then you must not expect anyone to be loyal to you.” In other words, don’t ever hope that these people will fulfil their duty of seeing to you once they have taken possession of whatever you give them.

Glory to Allāh! What wise words which we clear see. We can hope for loyalty from our family members, but it is very rare.

Demise

He passed away in 104 A.H. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 37)

Hadrat Mujāhid ibn Jubayr *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Mujāhid, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hajjāj, and his father's name is Jubayr.

Merits

Although he was a slave, he was an imām of his time as regards knowledge. ʿAllāmah ibn Saʿd *rahimahullāh* writes:

كان فقيها عالما ثقة كثير الحديث

"He was a jurist, an *ʿālim*, a reliable narrator who knew many Ahādīth."

Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* says that he was a treasure house of knowledge. He benefited from Hadrat ʿAlī, Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn ʿAbbās, Ibn Zubayr, Abū Saʿīd Khudrī and others *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Asceticism and abstention

His high level of knowledge was matched by his asceticism and abstention. Ibn Hibbān *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was a *mujāhid, faqīh* (jurist), an abstentious person, an ardent worshipper, and an ascetic."

Aloofness from this world

He always remain unattached and aloof from this world. His heart was so forbearing in this regard

that he had no attachment to anything of this world. He would remain worried and concerned all the time. Aʿmash relates: "Whenever we saw Mujāhid, we found him sad. Someone asked him the reason for this, so he said: "Abdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* held me by my hand and said: 'Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* held me by my hand and said: 'O ʿAbdullāh! Live in this world as though you are a traveller or a person who is crossing a path.'" (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 224)

Statements

1. Hadrat Layth narrates that Hadrat Mujāhid said: "The person who considers himself to be great and treated himself as a great person has in fact disgraced his *Dīn*. The person who considers himself to be insignificant has in fact elevated his *Dīn*."

Note: This is because Allāh *taʿālā* loves humility and submission from His slave; and in return for it, He bestows him with honour and dignity.

2. "When a slave turns to Allāh *taʿālā* with all his heart, Allāh *taʿālā* directs the hearts of the believers towards him."

Note: Allāh *taʿālā* Himself looks at him with mercy, and directs the believers to turn to him with mercy and affection.

3. Hadrat Abān ibn Sālih narrates that Hadrat Mujāhid said: "On three occasions I read the

Qur'ān before Hadrat Ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* by stopping at every verse, and asking him about the circumstances surrounding the revelation of that verse."

4. Khālid ibn Zayd narrates that Hadrat Mujāhid said: "The Qur'ān says: 'I am certainly with you as long as you obey me. If you do not act on my guidelines, I will distance my self from you.'"

Note: What a great loss for not practising on the Qur'ān. There can be no loss worse than this.

5. Khālid ibn Zayd narrates that Hadrat Mujāhid said: "Man has angels who accompany him. When he speaks good of his fellow brother, the angels say: 'May the same be for you as well.' But if he speaks ill of him, the angels say: 'O man! Conceal his faults.'" (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 2, p. 208)

Note: This proves the importance of overlooking the mistakes and concealing the faults of our fellow brothers. We also learn the repugnance of backbiting, complaining about, and exposing our fellow brothers.

6. "A man will be sentenced to go to Hell, and he will say: 'O my Allāh! You know very well that I did not think of You in this way.' Allāh *ta'ālā* will say [while He knows fully well]: 'Okay, tell me what your thoughts about Me were?' He will reply: 'I thought You will pardon me.' Allāh *ta'ālā* will say: 'Release him.'"

Note: Look at the extent of Allāh's mercy – He pardons a sinner and saves him from Hell merely because he had hopes in Allāh's pardon. This is the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* which He bestows on whomever He wills.

7. "The words *Lā ilāha illallāh* should be the last words a person says when he goes to sleep. This is because sleeping is also a type of death. The person does not know whether this sleeping will end in his real death – and so, he will not be able to utter the *kalimah* again."

Demise

Fadl ibn Dakīn says that he passed away in 102 A.H. while he was in *sajdah* (prostration). He was 83 years old at the time. Yūsuf ibn Sulaymān says that he passed away in 103 A.H. Yahyā ibn Saʿīd says that he passed away in 104 A.H. (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 2, p. 208)

Hadrat Iyās ibn Muʿāwiyah *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Iyās, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Wāthilah, and his father's name is Muʿāwiyah. He is well known as a Basrī. He is a Tābiʿī.

Merits

Hadrat Iyās *rahimahullāh* was a famous judge of his time. Jurisprudence was his special field and it was because of his expertise in this field that he was appointed as a judge in Basra during the Umawī caliphate.

He received an extraordinary share of intelligence and insight. He was an embodiment of intelligence and acumen. People of his time used to say: "An extremely intelligent person is born in every century, and Iyās is the one for this century."

Ibn ʿImād Hambalī *rahimahullāh* says: "His intelligence and sharpness of mind were proverbial."

He said: "I assessed all the merits of man and concluded that truthfulness in speech is the most honourable."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a factual point he made! May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him.

Hadīth

He narrated Ahādīth from his father, Hadrat Muʿāwiyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Saʿīd ibn Musayyib *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Saʿīd ibn Jubayr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Hadrat Hammād *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh* are listed among his students.

Demise

He passed away in 122 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 63)

Hadrat Hasan ibn Hasan *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Hasan. He was a lamp from the family of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, i.e. the son of Hadrat Hasan ibn ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhumā*. His mother's name was Khaulah.

He narrated Hadīth from Hadrat Hasan *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and ʿAbdullāh ibn Jaʿfar.

Statements

On one occasion he said to a person who made excessive claims of love [for Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* family]: "You claim that you love us for Allāh's sake. If you are true in your claim, you must love us as long as we obey Allāh *taʿālā*. But if we disobey Him, you must become our enemy."

On hearing these words, a person said to him: "You people are from the family and close relatives of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*." He said: "I am disappointed with you for thinking in this way. If mere family ties with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* were sufficient to save a person – with no obedience whatsoever to him – then those who were closer to him than us would have been the first to benefit from this (e.g. Abū Tālib, Abū Lahab, etc.). By Allāh! I fear that we sinners from the Ahl al-Bayt (family of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*) will receive double the punishment of

ordinary sinners. At the same time, I am hopeful of the obedient ones in my family receiving double the reward. Your condition is most disappointing. Fear Allāh *taʿālā* and speak the truth about us because the thing which you desire will be given to you in full [if you really desire Allāh's pleasure, speak the truth about us and you will be rewarded in full]. And we ourselves will only be pleased with you when you speak the truth."

Demise

Mansūr [the caliph] had him imprisoned and he passed away in prison in 145 A.H. He was 88 years old at the time. (*Tābiʿīn*)

Hadrat Zayd ibn Aslam *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Zayd, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Usāmah, and he had the honour of being a slave of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

Merits

Zayd was the slave of that great and honourable personality, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, whose slightest companionship would make a person an embodiment of knowledge and practice. Zayd was from among his special slaves, and we can well imagine what treasures of knowledge and practice he must have acquired from him. In comparison to Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, he acquired more knowledge from his son, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhumā*. His companionship embellished him with the treasure of knowledge and he was included in the list of the *ʿulamāʾ* of Madīnah.

Hadrat Zayd *rahimahullāh* used to conduct lessons in Musjid-e-Nabawī. A person like Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn *rahimahullāh* would leave his own family classes and join the classes of Hadrat Zayd *rahimahullāh*.

Note: This is an important lesson to learn. A great person like Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn *rahimahullāh* would leave his family classes and attend the classes of a slave because he was an embodiment of knowledge and practice.

Imām Nawawī *rahimahullāh* writes: “He was a righteous Tābiʿī. Just looking at him would spur a person into worship.”

Abū Hāzim *rahimahullāh* says: “O Allāh! You know very well that I look at Zayd because I get the strength to worship You.” If this was the effect of merely looking at him, what must have been the effect of meeting him and conversing with him!?

Demise

He passed away in 132 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 128)

Qāri Shurayh ibn Hārith *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Shurayh and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Umayyah. He was from a non-Arab family which became a confederate of the Kindah tribe and settled down in Yemen.

Merits

He met many senior Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and benefited from their company. He was very intelligent by nature and therefore acquired a distinguished academic position among his contemporaries. Imām Nawawī *rahimahullāh* writes: "All scholars unanimously agree to Shurayh's reliability, integrity, merit, virtue, intelligence, and using his narrations as proofs."

The qualities and capabilities which are needed by a judge were found to perfection in Shurayh *rahimahullāh*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had said with regard to Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

أَقْضَاهُمْ عَلِيٌّ

"ʿAlī is the most proficient of them in passing judgement."

And ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to refer to Qādī Shurayh as:

أَقْضَى الْعَرَبِ

"The greatest judge of the Arab nation." (Tahdhīb al-Asmā', vol. 1, p. 243)

Sharp perception

As a result of his intelligence and sharp mind, he would not be deceived by the outward condition of those who presented their cases before him. A woman sought help against a man on one occasion. She came into the court and began crying profusely. Imām Shaʿbī *rahimahullāh* was present and said to Qādī Shurayh: "This woman appears to be wronged." Qādī Shurayh said: "Crying is not proof of being oppressed. The brothers of Yūsuf *ʿalayhis salām* also came crying to their father."

Remaining aloof from *fitnah*

He disliked corruption and dissent. Many major political changes took place in his life. The conflict between ʿAbd al-Malik and Ibn Zubayr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* continued for many years, and very few people could save themselves from getting caught up in it. But Qādī Shurayh *rahimahullāh* remained aloof from all this. During this conflict, he resigned from his post for a few years. He was so cautious about not falling into this conflict that he would not even ask anyone about what was transpiring. When people saw his disinterest, they too did not mention anything to him. (*Tābiʿīn*, vol. 7, p. 204)

Note: Allāh is most independent. Look at the level of Qādī Shurayh's caution and aloofness even

though it was the *khayr al-qurūn* (the best of eras). Whereas today, we are in an era of deception and treachery, and we are surrounded by dirty politics. Our safety can only be assured if people like us remain totally aloof from all this. At the same time, we cannot remain aloof and distant from the problems and tribulations which are afflicting the Muslim masses. We have to see to their welfare and well-being. If we can help them while maintaining our own wellness and protecting our own selves, we should certainly help them. In fact, we should consider it to be our duty. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Appointment to the post of judge

His acumen and capability was well-known even before he could be appointed to the post of judge. Thus, people would come to him to arbitrate on their disputes. On seeing one of his judgements, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* appointed him as the judge of Kūfah.

The background to this is as follows: Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* purchased a horse from a person on condition he is happy with it. He gave the horse to a rider to test it out. The horse suffered an injury while the person was riding it. Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* wanted to return it but the owner refused to take it back. A dispute arose and Shurayh was made the arbitrator. He passed this judgement: If the horse was ridden after obtaining permission from the owner, it may

be returned to him. If permission to ride it was not obtained, it cannot be returned.

Another narration relates the above story as follows: The horse died while it was being tested. Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* wanted to return it. A dispute arose and the case was referred to Shurayh *rahimahullāh*. He said: "The person who purchased it will have to keep it. If not, he may return it in the same condition as he received it." On hearing his decision, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* appointed him as the judge of Kūfah.

Passing a judgement against Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*

Hadrat ʿAlī's *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* armour fell down on one occasion and he lost it. It went into the ownership of a *dhimmī* (non-Muslim living under the protection of the Islamic state). Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* made a claim in the court of Qādī Shurayh. Shurayh asked the *dhimmī* what he has to say about the claim. He replied: "The proof of my ownership is that the armour is under my control." Shurayh asked Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "Do you have any proof of ownership, and proof that your armour had fallen off?" He brought his son, Hadrat Hasan *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Qunbur as witnesses. Shurayh said: "I can accept the testimony of Qunbur, but not of Hasan." Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked: "Did you not hear the

statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

اَلْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ سَيِّدَا شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ

"Hasan and Husayn are the leaders of the youth of Paradise."

Shurayh said: "I heard it, but I do not regard a son's testimony in favour of his father to be worthy of consideration."

Hadrat ʿAli *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* accepted his decision and allowed the armour to remain with the *dhimmī* (who was a Jew). The Jew was very much affected by the decision and said: "The armour is really yours and your religion is the true religion. A judge of the Muslims passes a decision against the Amīr al-Mu'minīn and he accepts his decision without any complaint! I testify that Muhammad [*sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] was the true Messenger of Allāh." Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was so pleased with his embracing of Islam that he gave the armour to the Jew as a gift.

A decision against his son

One of his sons had a dispute with a few people. The son related the story to his father and said: "If I am in the right and there is hope of my winning the case, I will make a claim in court. If not, I will let it rest." Shurayh pondered over the dispute and advised his son to make the claim in

court. But when the case was heard in court, he passed a decision against his son.

When he returned home, his son said to him: “Had I not sought your advice from before hand, I would have no complaint. However, you humiliated me even after I sought your advice!?” Shurayh replied: “My dear son! You are more beloved to me than all those people. But I love Allāh *taʿālā* more than you. You certainly sought my advice. After I studied the entire case, I found them to be in the right. But if I told you that, you would have made peace with them and their right would have been usurped.”

Demise

There are differences of opinion with regard to his date of death. It is any time between 76 A.H. and 79 A.H. (*Tābiʿīn*)

Hadrat ʻUbaydullāh ibn ʻAbdillāh *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʻUbaydullāh, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʻAbdillāh. He is the grandson of ʻUtbah who is the brother of the famous Sahābī, Hadrat ʻAbdullāh ibn Masʻūd *radiyallāhu ʻanhu*.

Merits

His house was a cradle of knowledge and practice. This environment made him a person who combined knowledge with practice. He is a distinguished Tābiʻī. He benefited from the company of Hadrat Abū Hurayrah, Ibn ʻUmar, and Ibn ʻAbbās *radiyallāhu ʻanhum*.

Jurisprudence

He enjoyed an eminent position in *fiqh*. Imām Abū Jaʻfar says: "He had a lofty position in the knowledge of injunctions, the lawful, and the prohibited." The greatest mandate of his juristical acumen is that he was one of the seven famous jurists of Madīnah Munawwarah.

Asceticism and worship

Asceticism and worship were his special qualities. The caliph, ʻUmar ibn ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz *rahimahullāh* was trained under him. He was so affected by his moral excellences, that he used to say: "Remaining in the company of ʻUbaydullāh for a single hour and sitting with him for a short while

are more beloved to me than this world and whatever it contains. By Allāh, I am prepared to buy a single night from him for 1 000 dīnārs from the Bayt al-Māl (Islamic Treasury)." Some people said: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! You are so strict about not spending from the Bayt al-Māl, yet you are saying this!?" He replied: "By Allāh, in exchange for his advice, I will be able to bring in thousands of dīnārs into the Bayt al-Māl. Conversing with him brings freshness to the intellect, comfort to the heart, removes sorrow from the heart, and sets right my behaviour."

Note: Just ponder! A great and righteous caliph like 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz *rahimahullāh* is explaining the virtue and effect of remaining in the company of a righteous person. Unfortunately, people today do not even want to heart about remaining in the company of the righteous. This is why most of the *'ulamā'* are totally deprived of the blessing of knowledge and spiritual light. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Demise

He passed away in Madīnah either in 98 A.H. or in 99 A.H. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 268)

Hadrat Qāsim ibn Muhammad ibn Abī Bakr *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Qāsim, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad, and he is the son of Muhammad, the son of Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He was orphaned at a tender age.

Merits

He was one of the seven famous jurists of Madīnah Munawwarah. Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* had taken him under her care and tutored him. *Fiqh* was his speciality and he was an *imām* and *mujtahid* in this field.

His high level of knowledge was complemented by his actions. He was an embodiment of merits and character. He was similar to his pious grandfather, Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Zubayr relates: "I have not seen anyone who resembled Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* more than this youngster [Qāsim]."

The righteous caliph, Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh,* acknowledged his academic and moral excellences by saying: "If I had the right of appointing a caliph, I would have appointed Qāsim."

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Acknowledging the truth

He was very particular about the truth and would even consider a wrong of his father to be wrong, and would make *duʿā’* to Allāh *taʿālā* for his [father’s] forgiveness. His father, Muhammad ibn Abū Bakr was an arch enemy of Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and joined the rebels against him on the issue of the caliphate. Qāsim acknowledged this error of his father, he would go into prostration and make *duʿā’* to Allāh *taʿālā* by saying: “O Allāh! Forgive my father for his sins with regard to Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu.*”

Demise

He passed away in 107 A.H. or 108 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 402)

Hadrat Nāfiʿ ibn Jubayr *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Nāfiʿ, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad, and he is the grandson of the famous Quraysh chief, Mutʿim ibn ʿAdīyy.

Merits

His knowledge made him from among the senior Tābiʿīn. He was from among the muftīs of Madīnah Munawwarah.

The desire for self-rectification

He would purposefully do things which would be against arrogance and haughtiness so that he could rectify his *nafs*.

Jaʿfar ibn Nujayh relates: "Nāfiʿ ibn Jubayr once attended the class of ʿAlā' ibn Harqī who was a slave of Haraqah. When ʿAlā' completed his lesson, Nāfiʿ addressed all who were present: 'Do you know why I came and sat with you?' They replied: 'To listen to the lesson.' Nāfiʿ said: 'No. I came so that by sitting with you, I may be able to express my submission before Allāh *taʿālā*.'"

In a similar vein, he sent a very ordinary person forward to lead them in salāh. After the salāh, he asked the person: "Do you know why I sent you forward?" He replied: "To lead you in salāh." He said: "No. Rather to express my submission before Allāh *taʿālā* by performing salāh behind you."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his concern to rectify his *nafs*. In order to safeguard himself against pride and arrogance, he attended the classes of those who were junior to him, and occasionally sent them forward to lead him in salāh. In this way, humility and submission may develop in him – qualities which are liked by Allāh *taʿālā*.

The commentary of *Ihyā'* narrates from *Hilyah* from Mālik ibn Dīnār:

قَالَ مُوْسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ يَا رَبِّ أَيْنَ أَبْغِيْكَ، قَالَ عِنْدَ الْمُنْكَسِرَةِ قُلُوْبُهُمْ

"Mūsā ʿalayhis salām asked: 'O my Sustainer! Where should I search for You?' Allāh taʿālā said: 'By those who are broken-hearted.'" (Madāmīn Hadīthīyyah, p. 58).

Demise

He passed away in 93 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 528)

Hadrat Yahyā ibn Saʿīd *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Yahyā, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Saʿīd. His lineage goes back to the Ansār of Madīnah.

Merits

He was a distinguished Tābiʿī as regards his knowledge. Yahyā al-Qattān *rahimahullāh* said: "Yahyā ibn Saʿīd enjoys a position higher than Zuhrī because there are differences of opinion with regard to Zuhrī, but no differences with regard to Yahyā."

In the beginning he was a judge of Madīnah. When the ʿAbbāsī caliphate was established, Abū Jaʿfar Mansūr ʿAbbāsī appointed him to the coveted position of chief justice.

A few principles

Yahyā ibn Saʿīd used to state certain principles which – even today – serve as lessons to those who make a target of each other over the most trivial *masā'il* (issues) of *madhāhib* (plural of *madh-hab*).

He used to say: "The *ʿulamā'* are broad-minded. The muftīs have always had differences on *masā'il*. One person considers a thing to be *halāl*, while another says it is *harām*. Despite such differences, no one finds fault with the other person."

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Note: We ought to practise on this excellent example left to us by these senior jurists – especially in our times. Unfortunately, people are very bold and audacious in this regard. They will issue *fatāwā* of not just *fisq* but *kufr* over minor differences. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Demise

He passed away in 143 A.H. in Hāshimīyyah. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 544)

Hadrat Yazīd ibn Habīb *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Yazīd and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Rajā'. He was a slave of the Banū 'Āmir ibn Lu'ayy tribe of the Quraysh. He was born in 53 A.H.

Merits

He was from among the leading Tābi'īn of Egypt. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* refers to him as al-Imām al-Kabīr (the senior imām). True desire for Islamic sciences in Egypt developed through him. He possessed great acumen in the field of *fiqh*. Hadrat 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz *rahimahullāh* appointed him to issue *fatāwā* in Egypt.

Respect for knowledge

He had great respect for knowledge, and would not go to the court of any ruler for this purpose. If anyone had a need, he would call the person to himself. Rayyān bin 'Abd al-'Azīz sent a message to him saying: "Come to me, I need to ask you certain things." He replied: "You must come to me. It will be an honour for you to come to me, and a disgrace for me to come to you."

Frankness

He fell ill on one occasion. Hautharah ibn Suhayl, the *amīr* of Egypt came to visit him and asked: "What is your opinion with regard to performing salāh in a garment which has the blood of a mosquito on it?" On hearing this, he turned his

face away from him and ended his conversation with him. On seeing this, Hautharah got up and departed. Yazīd looked towards him and said: "You are shedding the blood of Allāh's creation daily, yet you are asking me about the blood of a mosquito?!"

Demise

He passed away in 118 A.H. during the caliphate of Marwān. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 550)

Hadrat Nāfiʿ ibn Kā'ūs *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Nāfiʿ, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and his father's name was Kā'ūs or Hurmuz. He was of non-Arab descent. [He was a slave of Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*]. How did he become his slave? He was either taken as a prisoner of war and came into his lot, or Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* must have purchased him.

Merits

The kindness which Muslims showed to their slaves enabled them to reach elevated positions. Nāfiʿ *rahimahullāh* is one shining example of this. He enjoys a distinguished position in the academic history of Muslim slaves. Nāfiʿ had the good fortune of receiving the tutorship of a proficient personality like Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* from the very beginning, and grew up under his wing. He remained in the service of Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* for thirty years. He had a natural ability to seek knowledge. The companionship and training of an affectionate master caused his innate capabilities to glitter, and made him a king in the world of knowledge. All *ʿulamā'* and biographers attest to his intellectual greatness.

Imām Nawawī *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was a senior Tābiʿī. All scholars attest to his reliability and seniority." Khalīlī says: "Nāfiʿ was an imām of knowledge from among the leading Tābiʿīn of

Madīnah." Hadrat Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* himself was very proud of his slave. He used to say: "Allāh *taʿālā* has favoured me through Nāfiʿ."

Hadīth

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhumā* was a shore-less sea, and Nāfiʿ *rahimahullāh* was quenched from the same ocean. He memorized a large portion of his Ahādīth. The narrations of Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* alone are sufficient to make a person a *hāfiz-e-Hadīth*. But Nāfiʿ quenched his thirst from other fountains as well. Consequently, in addition to studying under Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, he also took benefit [from the knowledge of] Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Hadrat Abū Saʿīd Khudrī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Umm al-Mu'minīn Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* and others. The knowledge and experience which he gained from these personalities made him a distinguished *hāfiz-e-Hadīth* from among the Tābiʿīn.

ʿAllāmah ibn Saʿd *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was a reliable narrator who narrated many Ahādīth." Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* refers to him as Imām al-ʿIlm (an imām in knowledge), and includes him in the first level of *huffāz-e-Hadīth* (memorizers of Hadīth). The quality of his narrations are like absolutely pure gold.

Khalīl *rahimahullāh* says: "All the experts in the field unanimously consider him to be *sahīh ar-riwāyah* (one whose narrations are most

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authentic). Some scholars go to the extent of giving preference to him over Sālim, from whom he heard Ahādīth. Others consider them to be equals. All his narrations are pure from errors.

This is especially so with regard to his narrations from Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* – there can be no doubt whatsoever about them. Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* used to say: "When I used to hear the Hadīth of Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* from the mouth of Nāfiʿ, I would not bother about getting it verified from others." The *Muhaddithūn* (erudite Hadīth scholars) refer to the following transmission as a golden transmission (*silsilatudh dhahab*):

مالك عن نافع عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنه

"[Imām] Mālik on the authority of Nāfiʿ, on the authority of Ibn ʿUmar radiyallāhu ʿanhu."

Fiqh

He was also an expert in *fiqh* by virtue of what he learnt from his affectionate master [Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*]. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* refers to him as Nāfiʿ al-Faqīh (Nāfiʿ the jurist). After the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*, he was the "executive" member of the group of *ʿulamāʾ* and those who issue *fatāwā* in Madīnah. But he did not issue *fatāwā* out of respect for his *ustādh* (teacher), Sālim ibn ʿAbdillāh, who was the son of his master, ʿAbdullāh ibn Umar and also one of the seven famous jurists of Madīnah. Hadrat

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* had full confidence in his knowledge, so he sent him to the Muslims of Egypt to teach them the Sunnah.

Demise

He passed away in 117 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 498, 502)

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Hadrat Rajā' ibn Hayāt *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Rajā', his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Nasr, and his father's name is Hayāt ibn Jarwal.

Hadīth

He is a Tābiʿī, and he heard Ahādīth from Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀs, Abū Dardā' and Abū Saʿīd Khudrī *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Merits

He was from among the senior *ʿulamā'* of Shām. ʿAllāmah Ibn Saʿd *rahimahullāh* writes:

كان ثقة عالما فاضلا كثير العلم

"He was a reliable narrator, an ʿālim, and a distinguished person who possessed a lot of knowledge."

ʿAllāmah Nawawī *rahimahullāh* writes: "All scholars unanimously acknowledge his seniority, and his personal and academic merits." He was an expert in Hadīth and *fiqh*. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* refers to him as an imām and Shaykh ahl ash-Shām (the shaykh of the people of Shām). Matar al-Warrāq says: "I have not met a better Shāmī person than Rajā' ibn Hayāt, nor a jurist who narrated more Ahādīth than him."

He occupied a distinguished position among his contemporary *ʿulamā'*. They all acknowledged his

academic excellences. Mak-hūl who himself was an erudite scholar of Shām refers to him as his shaykh, master, and chief of all the people of Shām. Mak-hūl would not answer any question on any issue in his presence. Mūsā ibn Yasār relates: "A person asked Mak-hūl for a ruling on an issue when he was in the musjid. He said to him: 'Go and ask my shaykh and chief, Rajā' ibn Hayāt." Ibn 'Aun says: "I have not seen anyone like Rajā' ibn Hayāt in Shām, Ibn Sīrīn in Iraq, and Qāsim in the Hijāz."

Abstention and worship

Together with all this knowledge, he was an ardent worshipper and ascetic. Ibn Hibbān *rahimahullāh* says: "He was an ardent worshipper and ascetic of Shām." His asceticism and piety made him totally independent of the rulers and the affluent, and he would not go to any of them. Someone asked him: "Why do you not go to the ruler of our time?" He replied: "The Lord of the worlds for whom I left these people is sufficient for me."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent reply! It demonstrates his perfect belief in the oneness of Allāh *ta'ālā* and his genuine reliance on Him.

An important achievement

His most important achievement and greatest *Dīnī* service was that he was the one who advised Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik to appoint 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz *rahimahullāh* as the next caliph.

Based on the Hadīth – the one who advises towards a good deed is like a person who carries it out – he is also included in this excellent deed. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 123)

Statement

A man was bidding farewell to him and said to him: "O Abū Miqdām! May Allāh *taʿālā* protect you." He replied: "O my brother! Do not make *duʿā'* for his protection, rather make *duʿā'* for the protection of his *īmān*." (*Hilyah*, vol. 5, p. 193)

Demise

He passed away in 112 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower him with His mercy. (*Tābiʿīn*)

Hadrat Zarr ibn Hubaysh *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Zarr, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Maryam, and he was an Asadī by lineage.

Merits

Imām Nawawī *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was a senior Tābiʿī whose reliability as a narrator and seniority is unanimously accepted."

Qur'ān

He was an illustrious reciter and scholar of the Qur'ān. Hāfiz Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr *rahimahullāh* writes:

كان عالما بالقران قارئا فاضلا

"He was knowledgeable in the Qur'ān and a distinguished reciter."

He also conducted Qur'ān lessons.

Visiting the righteous

Zarr ibn Hubaysh relates: "I departed with a delegation of people from Kūfah. By Allāh, my sole purpose for this journey was to have the honour of meeting the *Muhājir* and *Ansār* Sahābah. When I reached Madīnah, I used to remain in the company of Ubayy ibn Kaʿb and ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn ʿAuf *radiyallāhu ʿanhumā.*"

He relates: "I decided to go to Madīnah during the era of Hadrat 'Uthmān *radiyallāhu 'anhu* for the sole purpose of meeting the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum*. I met Safwān ibn 'Assāl and asked him: 'Do you have the honour of being in the company of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*?' He replied: 'Yes. In fact, I joined him in twelve battles.'" (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 4, p. 202)

Hadīth

He narrated Ahādīth from Hadrat 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, 'Uthmān Ghanī, 'Alī, 'Ammār ibn Yāsir, and 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhum*.

Words of advice

Suwayd Kalbī relates that Hadrat Zarr ibn Hubaysh wrote a letter of advice to 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān. The latter portion of this letter stated: "You must not become greedy and covetous because of your sound physical health because you know yourself [you know that you will have to die one day]. You must remember the statements of those who have departed."

He then quoted two poems which translate as follows: "When man has children and becomes physically weak due to old age, and illnesses come to him, it is the time for him to take the help of his children."

When he read the letter, he cried to the extent of wetting one side of his clothes. He then said:

"Zarr is correct. Had he written anything else, it would have been weak compared to this." (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 2, p. 20)

Demise

Abū 'Ubaydah says that he passed away in 81 A.H. Hadrat Khalīfah says that he passed away in 82 A.H. He lived in this temporary abode for 120 years. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 3, p. 31)

Hadrat ʿAmr ibn Murrah *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAmr, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and his father's name is Murrah.

He was an illustrious scholar of Kūfah. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was a reliable and credible narrator, and an imām." Misʿar says: "I have not seen anyone better than him."

Hadīth

Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* gives him the title of Hāfiz – this is sufficient testimony for his memorizing of Hadīth. ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Mahdī lists him among the *huffāz* of Kūfah. Hafs ibn Ghiyāth says: "I have not heard Aʿmash *rahimahullāh* speaking highly of anyone apart from ʿAmr ibn Murrah." Shuʿbah used to say: "All narrators of Hadīth commit some mistake or the other, but Ibn ʿAun and ʿAmr ibn Murrah are the exceptions in this regard."

Teachers and students

He studied Hadīth under ʿAbdullāh ibn Aufā, Abū Wā'il, Murrah at-Tayyib, Saʿīd ibn Musayyib, Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, and Ibrāhīm Nakhaʿī *rahimahumullāh*. Abū Is-hāq Sabīʿī, Aʿmash, Auzāʿī, Thaurī, Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh* and others were his students.

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Devotion in salāh

His knowledge was embellished with the jewel of actions. He used to perform salāh with such submission that it appeared as if the moment he completes his salāh he will be forgiven. Shuʿbah relates: "Whenever I used to watch ʿAmr ibn Murrah performing salāh, I would think to myself that he will be bestowed with acceptance by Allāh *taʿālā* even before he completes his salāh." Another narration states: "that he will be forgiven".

Statements

1. "I seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from thinking that He will punish the believers. I seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from thinking that He will blacken the faces of the believers."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at what hope and good thoughts he has about believers! May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow us all the ability to have such thoughts about our fellow Muslims.

2. "The person who makes the Hereafter his objective has destroyed this world. The one who makes this world his objective has destroyed his Hereafter. You should destroy what is temporary for what is eternal."

Note: You should therefore bear the destruction of this world for the eternity of the Hereafter.

3. “Satan said: ‘How can man ever escape from me? When he is angry, I am in his nose. When he is happy I am in his heart.’”

4. “A man entered Paradise and said:

لاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللهِ

“There is no power and might except from Allāh.”

As a result, he was elevated by one level. He said the same thing again, and was elevated by another level. An angel said to him: ‘Are you not ashamed of begging so much from Allāh!?” The man replied: ‘Did you ever ask my Sustainer for anything?’ Abū Sinān then recited this verse:

وَلَوْ لاَ إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَآءَ اللهُ لاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللهِ

“When you entered your orchard, why did you not say: ‘Whatever Allāh wills shall come to pass. There is no power except with Allāh.’” (Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 39) (Ḥilyah, vol. 5, p. 109, no. 298)

Demise

He passed away in 116 A.H. ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Maysarah who was present for his funeral said: “He was the best human.” May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*)

Hadrat ʿAmr ibn ʿAbdillāh Sabīʿī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAmr, his father's name is ʿAbdullāh, his grandfather's name is ʿAlī, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Is-hāq. He was a well-known person from the Hamdān family. His family settled down in Kūfah during the Islamic era. His grandfather, ʿAlī, went to Madīnah Munawwarah during the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Bearing in mind his family honour, Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* allotted a stipend of 15 500 for ʿAlī, and 100 for each of his family members.

Birth

He was born in the latter part of Hadrat ʿUthmān's *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* caliphate, i.e. when three years remained for his caliphate.

Merits

He grew up in Kūfah which was a centre of knowledge and learning. He had a natural capability for acquiring knowledge, and so, he took maximum benefit from the *ʿulamā'* of Kūfah. He was eventually included in the list of senior *ʿulamā'*.

ʿAllāmah Thaurī *rahimahullāh* writes: "The *ʿulamā'* unanimously agree on his reliability as a narrator and his high status." Imām Dhahabī

rahimahullāh describes him as follows: “He was a treasure house of knowledge. He was an excellent reciter of the Qur’ān. The companions of Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to refer to him as ʿAmr al-Qārī (ʿAmr – the *qārī*). He acquired this knowledge from the famous scholars of the time – Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sulamī and Aswad ibn Yazīd.”

He is also included among the senior memorizers of Hadīth. He met the following Companions of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*: Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās, Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn Zubayr, Amīr Muʿāwiyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and many others.

Asceticism and worship

His immense knowledge was accompanied with deeds. He was a senior ascetic and ardent worshipper. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes:

كَانَ صَوَّامًا قَوَّامًا مُتَبَتِّلًا

“He used to fast a lot, spend the nights in salāh, and remain aloof from people.”

He used to complete the Qur’ān in three days and keep many fasts. But when he became weak later in life, he could not maintain the difficult acts of worship which he used to do. This caused a drop in his practices. Despite this, he would fast three days every month, every Monday and Thursday, and during the Sacred Months. And he used to

read the entire Sūrah al-Baqarah in a single *rakʿat*.

Note: Abundant worship is found in many Tābiʿīn. This shows that it is not a *bidʿah*, but a Sunnah. Understand this well. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us all to practise on this as well. Āmīn.

Demise

He passed away in 127 A.H. or 128 A.H. He was about 100 years old at the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 522)

Hadrat Yahyā ibn Abī Kathīr *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Yahyā, his *kunnīyyat* is Abu Nasr at-Tā'ī, his father's name is Sālih and the latter's *kunnīyyat* is Abū Kathīr.

Merits

He was an embodiment of guidance, insight, and piety. He was blessed with the ability to derive rulings and undertake *ijtihād* (individual judgement). He was a very humble and unassuming man. He bore many difficulties for the acquisition of knowledge. He is a Tābiʿī and he narrated Ahādīth from Abū Umāmah Bāhilī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu.*

Statements

1. "Knowledge cannot be acquired with bodily comfort." He also said: "The inheritance of knowledge is far better than the inheritance of gold and silver. And true conviction is better than pearls."

2. "Learning the Qur'ān, teaching it, and learning *fiqh* is equal to salāh."

Note: In other words, just as a person is rewarded by Allāh *taʿālā* for performing salāh and it is a means of gaining closeness to Him, learning and

teaching the Qur'ān is also a means of getting close to Allāh *taʿālā* and acquiring rewards.

3. "Man will be questioned about his salāh on the day of Resurrection. If his salāh is in order, his other deeds will also be in order. If his salāh is faulty, none of his other deeds will be in order."

Note: This shows the great importance of salāh. We should pay particular attention to performing it in accordance with the Sunnah.

4. "A genuine *ʿālim* is the one who has acquired fear of Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: The same theme is mentioned wherein Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

"It is those who have understanding that fear Allāh." (Sūrah Fāṯir, 35: 28)

5. "The *ʿulamā'* are like salt which is the means of setting right and rectifying everything. When salt itself is spoilt, no one can put it right. It has to be trampled by the feet and thrown away."

Note: The *ʿulamā'* ought to recognize their true status and be concerned about their rectification (*iṣlāḥ*) so that they can be the means of rectifying others. If not, they may well become despicable in the eyes of the public. This is a teaching of a

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senior Tābiʿī and is worthy of our full attention. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us.

6. "It is a sign of immaturity and stupidity when man remembers his good qualities and forgets his evils."

7. "*Taqwā* is the best thing in all deeds, and humility is the best thing in all acts of worship."

8. "Paradise is beautified on two occasions, and the *hūrs* (doe-eyed damsels of Paradise) beautify themselves on these occasions: (1) at the time of salāh, (2) at the time of jihād. When a man returns from salāh and jihād and does not ask Allāh *taʿālā* for the *hūrs* and for Paradise, the *hūrs* say: "Away with you! Why did you not ask Allāh *taʿālā* for us, and why did you not ask Him for Paradise?"

Note: To bear in mind these glad tidings and rewards when doing deeds is in total conformity with the *Dīn* and the *Tarīq*. Understand this well.

9. "The evil and mischief which a talebearer can cause in a single hour cannot be caused by a sorcerer in one month."

Note: This shows the reprehensibility of tale bearing. To carry tales from here to there with the objective of causing a scandal is known as *namīmah* (tale bearing) in Arabic. According to a Hadīth, a talebearer is a *fāsiq* (flagrant sinner):

اَلنَّمَّامُ فَاسِقٌ

"A talebearer is a fāsiq."

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* also referred to a backbiter as a *fāsiq*:

اَلْقَتَّاتُ فَاسِقٌ

"A backbiter is a fāsiq."

It is necessary for us to keep away from both these people.

10. "An excellent friend is one who says to his friend: 'Come let us prepare for the Hereafter with salāh and fasting before death comes to us.' The worst friend is the one who says: 'Come, let us eat, drink, enjoy ourselves, and live life to the full before death comes to us even if it means destruction to our Hereafter.'"

Demise

ʿĀmir ibn Yasāf says: "Yahyā ibn Abī Kathīr was a handsome man who used to be well dressed. But he left behind only thirty dirhams at the time of his death. This money was used for his burial." He passed away in 129 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 3, p. 78)

Hadrat Ayyūb ibn Abī Tamīmah Sakhtiyānī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ayyūb, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bakr, his father's name was Kayyān but he was popularly known by his *kunnīyyat*, Abū Tamīmah.

Merits

Although he was a slave, he was an embodiment of knowledge and good deeds. 'Allāmah Ibn Sa'd *rahimahullāh* writes:

كان ثقة ثبتا في الحديث جامعا عدلا ورعا كثير العلم حجة

"He was a reliable and credible narrator of Hadīth, possessed many good qualities, a just and ascetic person, possessed a lot of knowledge, and a proof [whose proofs were accepted]."

He was a Tābi'ī. Imām Nawawī *rahimahullāh* writes: "All scholars acknowledged his greatness, leadership, memory, reliability, abundant knowledge, acumen, and high rank."

Imām Ibn 'Imād Hambalī includes him among the erudite *'ulamā'*.

He was one of the most distinguished memorizers of Hadīth of Basra. Imām Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was a *hāfiz-e-Hadīth* and from among the erudite *'ulamā'*." He benefited tremendously

from many senior Tābiʿīn in the field of Hadīth. The extent of his knowledge of Hadīth can be gauged from the fact that his narrations reach 800 in number, and 2 000 according to another report.

Imām Mālik, Sufyān Thaurī, Ibn ʿUyaynah, Ibn Abī ʿArawīyyah, Maʿmar, Aʿmash, Qatādah and Shuʿbah *rahimahumullāh* and other senior *ʿulamā'* and imams all benefited from him.

He was also an expert in the field of *fiqh*. Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh* refers to him as *sayyid al-fuqahā'* (the chief of the jurists). However, his juristical expertise did not become known because he was extremely cautious in this regard. When a person reaches a lofty position, it is difficult for him to safeguard himself against self-conceit and deception. This is why he was always fearful of falling into this trap. He used to say: "Who is there who can save himself from this when a person relates one Hadīth and automatically acquires a certain position in the hearts of the people!? At such a time, certain thoughts (e.g. self-conceit and vanity) creep into his heart." But he was safeguarded from this.

One of the ailments of knowledge is that a learned person does not like his ignorance [on a certain subject] to become known to others. But Hadrat Ayyūb *rahimahullāh* would clearly state that he does not know to many of those who asked him questions. He would ask some of them to refer their questions to another scholar.

His knowledge was surpassed by his asceticism and piety. Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* says: "He was a practising *ʿālim*, a humble man, an ardent worshipper, and excellent person." He was honoured with the opportunity of performing hajj forty times. But he would always conceal his acts of worship and spiritual exercises.

Statement

He used to say: "It is better for a person to conceal his asceticism than to expose it."

He used to spend entire nights in worship. But in order to conceal it from people, he would speak with a raised voice the next morning. In this way, people would think that he woke up just now.

Love for Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam

He had intense and ardent love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. On hearing a Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he would cry so much that onlookers would feel sorry for him. Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* says: "I commenced studying Hadīth under him after seeing the honour which he had for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*."

As a consequence of this love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he paid particular attention to following the Sunnah. Hammād ibn Zayd *rahimahullāh* relates: "I sat in the company of many people, but I found Hadrat Ayyūb

rahimahullāh to be the most particular in following the Sunnah."

He was very pleasant by nature. Hammād ibn Zayd *rahimahullāh* says: "I have not seen anyone meeting people in a more friendly and approachable manner than Ayyūb. If a person fell ill or passed away, he would certainly go to visit him or go to console the family. It would seem as if that [sick or deceased] person was the most respected in his sight. He would go to the most ordinary of people on such occasions. Ya'lā ibn Hakam was a slave who lived in his neighbourhood. He passed away and left behind none except his mother. Ayyūb went to her house for three days, and he would sit outside her door."

Demise

He passed away in 131 A.H. in Basra from an illness which he caught in a plague. He was 63 years old at the time. (*Tābi'īn*, p. 53, 58)

Hadrat Abū ʿUbaydah ibn ʿAbdillāh ibn Masʿūd *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿĀmir, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿUbaydah, his father's name is ʿAbdullāh, and his grandfather's name is Masʿūd. He is listed among the famous *ʿulamā'* and worshippers of Kūfah. He used to engage in a lot of *dhikr* and spiritual exercises. He is a Tābiʿī.

Statements

1. "As long as a person's heart is engaged in Allāh's *dhikr*, it is as if he is occupied in salāh even if he may be in the market place. If in the course of *dhikr*, his tongue and lips more, then it is even more meritorious."

2. "If a person sits on a main road with a bag full of gold coins, and gives one coin to each passer-by, while another sits next to him engaged in singing the greatness of Allāh *taʿālā*, the latter will be eligible for more reward."

3. "There was an oppressive king who stubbornly said: 'I will most certainly find out who is inhabiting the heavens and whose kingdom is running there.' When Allāh *taʿālā* saw his open rebellion, He caused the weakest of his creations to overpower him. A flea went into his brain via his nose and deprived him of his sleep. He instructed his subjects to strike him hard on his head. They began striking him and continued to

the extent that his brain got damaged. In this way, a small insect became the cause of his death." (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 3, p. 177)

Note: Haughty people like him continue to be born in every era. They actually challenge Allāh *taʿālā*. But He breaks their pride and arrogance, and disgraces them in this very world. The following verse was read to some arrogant people:

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَآؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَنْ يَّأْتِيْكُمْ بِمَآءٍ مَّعِيْنٍ

"Say: 'Look! If all your water becomes dry in the morning, who is it that will bring pure water to you?'" (Sūrah al-Mulk, 67: 30)

In their arrogance and haughtiness, they said: "We will dig the ground and extract water from it." Allāh *taʿālā* immediately took away the moisture [water] of their eyes, and an unseen voice said to them: "O you arrogant ones! Where will you be able to extract water from the ground, at least try to obtain the water for your eyes." They became blind because of the absence of moisture in their eyes. They were already blind of heart; they now became physically blind. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*. May Allāh *taʿālā* safeguard us from showing any disrespect to Him. Āmīn. (*Maʿāriful Qur'ān*, vol. 8, p. 328)

A mosquito enters through the nostril of Namrūd and troubles him

Namrūd ibn Kanʿān was a king of the past who ruled over the entire world. This caused him to become self-conceited. Rebellion, pride, haughtiness and arrogance embedded themselves into his heart to the extent that he made claims to divinity and began disputing with Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām*. Allāh *taʿālā* makes mention of this in the Qur'ān in the following verses:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِيْ حَاجَّ إِبْرٰهِيْمَ فِيْ رَبِّهِ أَنْ اٰتٰهُ اللهُ الْمُلْكَ ۘ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرٰهِيْمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِيْ يُحْيِيْ وَيُمِيْتُ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيِيْ وَأُمِيْتُ ؕ قَالَ إِبْرٰهِيْمُ فَإِنَّ اللهَ يَأْتِيْ بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِيْ كَفَرَ ؕ وَاللهُ لاَ يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِيْنَ.

"Have you not seen the person who argued with Ibrāhīm with regard to his Sustainer merely because Allāh had granted him kingship? When Ibrāhīm said: 'My Sustainer is He who gives life and causes death.' He said: 'I also give life and cause death.' Ibrāhīm said: 'Surely Allāh brings the sun from the east, so now you bring it from the west.' Then that unbeliever was left confounded. And Allāh does not show the straight path to the unjust." (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 258)

Allāh *taʿālā* sent an angel to this rebellious king who invited him repeatedly towards belief in the oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*. But he refused. The angel eventually said: "You prepare your armies, and I will come with my armies." Namrūd came to the battlefield with a powerful army. In the meantime, Allāh *taʿālā* opened the door of the mosquitoes

and huge mosquitoes fell upon Namrūd's people. In a short while they sucked all their blood and destroyed them all. One mosquito entered Namrūd's nostril and continued sucking his brains for four hundred years. He experienced such excruciating pain that death would have been better for him. He would strike his head against walls and rocks, strike it with hammers, and this wretched fellow eventually died in this humiliating way. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us. (*Ibn Kathīr* – Urdu – vol. 1, p. 324)

Note: Even today we see Allāh *taʿālā* breaking the intoxication of the pride, arrogance, position and authority of great intellects. But their eyes are not opening to the reality. Instead, they are becoming even more arrogant and rebellious. This is certainly a respite from Allāh *taʿālā*. How sorrowful the condition of man is!

Demise

He passed away after 180 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*)

Hadrat Abū Idrīs Khaulānī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿĀ'idh, his father's name is ʿAbdullāh, his grandfather is ʿAmr, and he is well known by his *kunnīyyat*, Abū Idrīs Khaulānī. He was born in 8 A.H. the year in which the battle of Hunayn took place during the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Merits

He was a learned and practising Tābiʿī and is included among the erudite *ʿulamā'* of Shām. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes:

أبو إدريس خولاني عالم أهل الشام...الفقيه أحد من جمع بين العلم والعمل

"Abū Idrīs Khaulānī was an ʿālim of Shām...he was a jurist and one who combined knowledge with actions."

He was considered to be the successor of Hadrat Abū Dardā' *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* in Shām.

Hadīth

He narrated Ahādīth from Hadrat ʿUmar, Hadrat Muʿādh ibn Jabal, Hadrat Bilāl and others *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* records details about him among the senior *huffāz* (memorizers of Hadīth).

Fiqh

He was a famous jurist of Shām. Imām Zuhrī *raḫimahullāh* included him among the jurist *ʿulamāʾ* of Shām. Ṯabarī *raḫimahullāh* mentions him among those *ʿulamāʾ* of Shām who were jurists and fully conversant with *ḫalāl* and *ḫarām.*

Statements

1. "O Allāh! Make my eyes tearful, my silence into moments of reflection, and my speech into Your remembrance."

2. "I met Ḏaḫḫāk in Khurāsān while I was wearing an old leather cloak. Ḏaḫḫāk said to me: 'O Abū Idrīs! A pure heart in dirty clothes is better than a dirty heart in clean clothes.'"

3. "If a person reduces all his worries into a single worry [worry about the Hereafter], Allāh *taʿālā* will make him indifferent to all other worries."

4. "The Qur'ān is a sign of conveying glad tidings, warnings, obligatory duties, stories, information, orders and prohibitions."

5. "Allāh *taʿālā* does not expose the secrets of a person who has the slightest bit of good in his heart."

6. "I would rather see a group of people lighting a fire in a musjid than seeing a non-*faqīh* (ignorant person) delivering a lecture."

Note: Unfortunately, the most ignorant of persons now deliver talks in the *masājid*. But more unfortunate than this is when an *ʿālim* cannot make a statement of knowledge and jurisprudence out of fear for dissent. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

7. "For *bidʿah* to be found in a heart is worse than a certain section of a musjid catching on fire."

8. "Humility and submission will be removed from this *ummah* until no humble person remains."

Note: It seems that this refers to our times. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us all with the treasure of humility and submission. Āmīn.

Demise

He passed away in 80 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower him with His mercy. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 521)

Hadrat Uways Khawlānī *rahimahullāh*

Statements

1. "Allāh *taʿālā* does not expose the secrets of a person who has the slightest bit of good in his heart."

2. "The person who relates Hadīth without practising is not a *faqīh*."

3. "Excellence in speech earns you respect of people, and setting right your heart earns you honour from Allāh *taʿālā*."

4. He used to leave his whip suspended in the musjid and say: "I am more deserving of lashing than animals." Whenever he experienced any laziness, he would whip himself on his shanks."

One of his supernatural feats (*karāmāt*) was that he used to walk on the Tigris River in Baghdad. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 44)

Note: This was his miracle (*karāmat*) which was a result of his good deeds. The pious elders say:

اَلأَحْوَالُ ثَمَرَاتُ الأَعْمَالِ

"Conditions are the fruits of actions."

In other words, when a person fulfils external acts of obedience, Allāh *taʿālā* bestows him with internal and spiritual favours.

In explaining certain specific differences between the conditions of believers and unbelievers, Hadrat ʿAllāmah Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* writes:

إِنَّ أَهْلَ اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لاَ يَحْصُلُ لَهُمْ هَذَا الْحَالُ إِلاَّ بَعْدَ الْمُبَالَغَةِ فِي اتِّبَاعِ الشَّرِيْعَةِ بِخِلاَفِ الْكُفَّارِ (اليواقيت والجواهير، ج٢، ص١٠٤)

"The pious servants of Allāh taʿālā only experience these conditions after they rigorously follow the Sharīʿah, as opposed to the unbelievers."

Hadrat Abū Wā'il ibn Salamah *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Shafīq, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Wā'il, and his father's name was Salamah. He was from the Asd ibn Khuzaymah tribe. He is more well-known by his *kunnīyyat* than by his name.

The era of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam

He was present during the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, but was quite young at the time. ʿUmar ibn Marwān relates: "I asked Abū Wā'il if he experienced the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*." He replied: 'Yes, I saw him but I was a very young boy at the time.'" However, as per authentic traditions, he is a Tābiʿī.

Merits

He was from among the distinguished *ʿulamā'* of Kūfah. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* refers to him as the shaykh and *ʿālim* of Kūfah. ʿAllāmah Nawawī *rahimahullāh* states that all scholars accept his reliability [as a Hadīth narrator] and seniority.

Fear of Allāh *taʿālā*

He was very much overpowered by the fear of Allāh *taʿālā*. Tears would flow from his eyes whenever any mention of Allāh *taʿālā* was made

before him, or any warning of Allāh *taʿālā* was discussed.

Abstention and worship

Worship was his special occupation. Hadrat Ibn Hibbān *rahimahullāh* says: He was a reliable narrator. He settled down in Kūfah and was from among its ardent worshippers and ascetics. The darkness of the night was his special time of worship. He used to beseech Allāh *taʿālā* and cry to Him while he was in *sajdah* (prostration). He used to say: "O Allāh! Pardon me and forgive me."

Note: If such was the restlessness of a Tābiʿī and his seeking of forgiveness, what should the condition of sinners like us have to be!?

Jihād

He had a mere superficial contact with this world. He had a small ordinary shack as a house in which he and his horse for jihād lived. When he had to go for jihād, he would break down the shack, and rebuild it when he returned.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his abstention, contentment and disassociation from the world. This is a real lesson for the *ummah*.

Halāl earning

He was very concerned about *halāl* earning. He preferred a single *halāl* dirham to a heap of wealth received for free. He used to say: "I prefer a

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single dirham which I earn from trade to ten dirhams which I receive as a stipend."

Note: Look at the importance which he attached to earning with one's own hands.

A source of blessing

Based on these moral and spiritual merits, people considered him to be a source of mercy and blessing. Hadrat Ibrāhīm *rahimahullāh* used to say: "You will always find a personality in every place who is a means of protection from calamities for that area. I think Shaqīq is from among such people."

Statements

1. "I feel ashamed to fear anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā*."

2. "As long as a person's heart is occupied in Allāh's *dhikr*, he is in salāh even if he is in the market place. If his lips are engaged in His *dhikr* together with his heart, then it is even better."

3. "There is such a big difference between you and the people [of the past]. When the world turned to them, they fled from it. When the world turned away from you, you ran behind it."

4. "It should not be that you appear to be a friend (*walī*) of Allāh *taʿālā* while you are really His enemy." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 35)

Note: In other words, people consider you to be a *walī* through your appearance and outward ways, while in Allāh's sight you did not even take a single step towards purity and righteousness.

Demise

He passed away in 82 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him and illuminate his grave. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 550)

Hadrat Bakr ibn ʿAbdillāh Muzanī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, and merits

His name is Bakr and his father's name was ʿAbdullāh. He was from the Muzaynah tribe.

He was from the *ʿulamāʾ* of Basra. Hadrat Hasan Basrī *rahimahullāh* was known as "Shaykh al-Basra", while he was known as "Fatā al-Basra" (the young scholar of Basra) because of his academic virtues. He was a distinguished *hāfiz* of Hadīth.

Affluence

Allāh *taʿālā* made him very wealthy as regards worldly comforts. He lived a life of comfort and luxury as a way of showing his appreciation to Allāh *taʿālā*. He liked exquisite clothing and would wear garments which cost 4 000 dirhams at a time. He was quite fastidious by nature. He purchased a sheet for 400 dirhams and the tailor wanted to mark out a pattern on it with soil. Hadrat Bakr *rahimahullāh* stopped him, got him to pound some camphor, and used that instead.

Note: Glory to Allāh! A Tābiʿī who was also a *muhaddith* wore an expensive sheet. From this we learn that there is no harm in wearing expensive clothing.

Despite this affluent situation, he considered himself to be a donkey in Allāh's court, and would always seek His grace and affection.

Note: This is the demand of total submission – i.e. a person always desires and seeks Allāh's grace and affection. Displaying independence from Allāh *taʿālā* is not only a sign of total deprivation, but an indication of transgression and rebellion. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us.

Statements

1. He said with regard to the prerequisite of companionship: "If your companion's sandal strap breaks and you cannot wait for him until he fixes it, or he needs to relieve himself and you do not wait until he finishes, then you are not his true companion."

Note: Without doubt, if you are on a journey with a person and you cannot wait for him to fulfil tasks of this nature, then you have not fulfilled the rights of companionship. In the same way, one has to take into consideration one's weak companions who are treading the path of *sulūk* towards the Hereafter. Take them into consideration so that they too can reach their destination.

2. "Do not speak excessively. If you say the correct things, you will not be rewarded for them [unless they are on matters of *Dīn*]. And if you say incorrect things, you will be taken to task for them." (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 62)

3. “From all my good deeds, I have the most reliance [and hope of reward] on love for a righteous person.” He stood up in ʿArafāt and said: “By Allāh, if I was not here today, Allāh *taʿālā* would have pardoned all these people.”

4. “A person can never be a *muttaqī* (pious) as long as he is not cautious about greed and anger.”

5. “The more my clothes and household possessions increased, the more Allāh’s displeasure with me increased. The more miserly I acted in spending my wealth, the more distant I became from Allāh *taʿālā*.”

6. “As long as you see your fellow brothers remaining aloof from you, you must understand that you have committed some sin or the other. You should then repent to Allāh *taʿālā*. When you see them loving you, understand that you have obeyed Him. So you should express thanks to Him. When you see a person occupied in looking at the faults of others, you must realize that he is being fooled through this occupation.

Demise

According to ʿAllāmah Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh*, he passed away in 106 A.H. in Basra. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*) The *Tabaqāt* states that he passed away in 108 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Qāsim – the conqueror of Sindh – *rahimahullāh*

Introduction

He was the first young soldier to conquer India, who, for the first time, placed his foot on the Indo-Pak Subcontinent in the area of Sindh. He impressed the non-Muslims in a short while through his bravery, soft-heartedness, noble character, intelligence and wisdom. Countless Hindus were impressed by his moral characteristics and entered the fold of Islam. (*Islāmī Encyclopaedia*, p. 1419)

The *Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb* (p. 889) states that he is a Tābiʿī.

Islamic teachings commence from Gujarat

Hadrat Maulānā Hakīm Sayyid ʿAbd al-Hayy Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes the following in *Yād-e-Ayyām*:

It is popularly believed that the message of Islam in India first spread from Sindh. In 93 A.H. Muhammad ibn Qāsim Thaqafī *rahimahullāh* crossed the desert of Sindh which was very similar to the land of Arabia, and his birth place, Marzbūm, and established an Islamic state there. It extended from Rājpūtānah from one side and the valley of Kashmir on the other side. This sultanate remained under Muslim control for about 120 years.

At the same time, we cannot deny the fact that he first set his sights on the green and lush mountains of Gujarat. He continued setting his sights on it until he took control of Gujarat and wielded his authority over it. (*Yād-e-Ayyām*, p. 43)

The journeys of Arab traders

During those days, Arab traders were transporting goods to distant lands via the Persian Gulf. Many Arab traders settled down in those lands. Some of them inhabited the island of Sarandeep. The rajah was interested in establishing friendly ties with the Muslims. He sent the families of the Arab traders on a ship and sent valuable gifts with them which were to be presented to Walīd.

But near Dabīl, the soldiers of Rajah Dāhir, who was the ruler of Sindh, looted the ship, and captured the Arab women and children. When Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf, the governor of caliph Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, heard of this, he wrote a letter to Rajah Dāhir asking him to punish the looters, free the prisoners, and return their goods and possessions. Dāhir replied: "This was the work of pirates, I can do nothing about it."

Historical records state that one of the women who was captured wrote a letter to Hajjāj informing him of what transpired and asked him to help the oppressed. After Hajjāj received [the above] reply from Dāhir, he took permission from the caliph and made preparations to attack

Sindh. ʻAbdullāh Sulamī was at the head of an army of 6 000 and attacked Sindh. But he was not successful; he was martyred. Budayl ibn Zahqah was sent but he and the 6 000 army were defeated. Hajjāj eventually sent his young and brave nephew and son-in-law, Muhammad ibn Qāsim, with an army comprising of 6 000 *mujāhidīn* from Shām to Sindh.

Muhammad ibn Qāsim conquers Sindh

Muhammad ibn Qāsim first went to Makrān. He stopped over there for a few days, proceeded to Qanzpūr (Panjgor), conquered it, and then took Armābīl (Armanbīlah) under his control. He then marched to Dībal and laid siege to the city. He dug a trench in front of his army, set the battle lines, and got the catapults ready. The famous historical fort-crushing catapult which was drawn by 500 men was also there. The Muslims continued the siege but the city dwellers defended themselves without any result.

When Hajjāj was informed of these depressing conditions, he instructed them to catapult the city with rocks. The moment they did this, the dome of Dībal was crushed to pieces and the courage of the inhabitants of the city was also broken. The Muslims got more brave, some of them made a rope ladder, and climbed the city wall. The ruler fled and the Muslims took control of the city. Muhammad ibn Qāsim got 4 000 Muslims to inhabit Dabīl and had a Jāmiʻ Musjid constructed.

He then advanced towards Nīraun and the rajah of the city made peace. He presented the Muslims with priceless gifts and saw to all their needs. Muhammad ibn Qāsim then advanced towards Yalghār and conquered other places along the way. He eventually crossed a river and laid siege to Shrīwedish. The ruler paid the *kharāj* (land tax) and made peace.

Muhammad ibn Qāsim now advanced towards the Sindh river and sent a small section of his army to conquer Sahwān. The inhabitants agreed to pay the *kharāj* and made peace. Muhammad ibn Qāsim crossed the Sindh river and reached the land of Rajah Rasil. Rajah Dāhir was ready to do battle at the head of an army of 60 000 which also comprised of war elephants. A bloody battle ensued in which Rajah Dāhir was killed. Muhammad ibn Qāsim raised the flag of victory on 20 June 712, corresponding with the year 93 A.H.

He then conquered city after city, and brought Brahmanābād, Sāwandrī under Muslim control. Many unbelievers and polytheists embraced Islam. The Muslim conquerors exercised absolute caution, did not attack the temples in any way, and built a Jāmiʿ Musjid there. Muhammad ibn Qāsim proceeded to take control of Sikkah, and then reached Multān. Rajah Gaur Singh went to battle against him but he was defeated and the fort was shut. The Muslims surrounded the place, and the inhabitants were defeated in the ensuing combat. The temple of this place was filled with

gold and silver, and all these treasures came into Muslim hands. According to [the historian], Balādhurī, a room which measured 18 metres by 10 metres was filled with gold. The Arabs therefore referred to Multan as a gold mine. In the course of all this, Muhammad ibn Qāsim received news of the death of Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf in 95 A.H./714 C.E.

Muhammad ibn Qāsim then conquered Balīmān Sarshat and Kīraj one after the other. The caliph, Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, passed away in the meantime, and Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik became the new caliph. He removed Muhammad ibn Qāsim from his post and appointed Yazīd ibn Abī Kabshah as governor of Sindh. Acting under the orders of Sālih ibn ʿAbd ar-Rahmān who was the governor of Iraq, Muhammad ibn Qāsim was put into chains and sent to Wāsit. Hajjāj had killed Sālih's brother, Ādam Khārijī, so Sālih imprisoned Muhammad ibn Qāsim in return. He was put to prison, succumbed to the torments of the prison, and passed away there. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower his mercy on him. (Sayyid Qāsim Mahmūd, *Islāmī Encyclopaedia*, p. 1420)

Note: How unfortunate! A devoted and brave *mujāhid* like Muhammad ibn Qāsim – who was not only the conqueror of India but its benefactor – was tormented by his own people, resulting in his death. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. May Allāh *taʿālā* continue showering this *ummah* with righteous believers like him until the

day of Resurrection so that Allāh's word may continue to reign supreme. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.

His character

In his book, *Wilādat Muhammadīyyah kā Rāz*, Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib 'Uthmānī relates an incident which displays the character of Muhammad ibn Qāsim. He writes:

I remember the story of Muhammad ibn Qāsim (the first conqueror of India who conquered the area of Sindh and Multān during the caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān). He was sixteen years old when the caliph appointed him as the governor of Khurāsān and sent him there. When he took over from the governor whom he replaced, the governor looked at his young age and said to him: "The caliph has made a major mistake by appointing a young man like you to be a governor over a rebellious region like Khurāsān."

Just ponder! Had Muhammad ibn Qāsim resorted to his emotions, he could have imprisoned this retrenched governor for showing disrespect to him [who was the new governor] and to the caliph. Instead, he humbled himself, exhibited great forbearance, and said: "Pardon the caliph for his error. And if I am too young and inexperienced, then I have intelligent people like you. I will carry out my tasks after consulting you. In this way, my young age and inexperience will be atoned." On hearing this reply, the old

governor felt very ashamed, remained silent, lowered his gaze, and left for his house.

After seeing Muhammad ibn Qāsim's excellent administration, planning, and political acumen, the old governor presented himself before him and acknowledged his capabilities and excellent administration by saying: "I acknowledge my foolishness and admit that the caliph did not err in the least in appointing you as the governor of Khurāsān. There was really no one better than you for this position. You accomplished in one week what others could not accomplish in seven years."

Note: After relating this incident, the great *Muhaddith*, Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad 'Uthmānī *rahimahullāh* – the author of *I'lā' as-Sunan* and nephew of Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* – writes: "This example of Muhammad ibn Qāsim's character is something which the *'ulamā'* of today cannot present." (*Wilādat Muhammadīyyah kā Rāz*, p. 392)

Muhammad ibn Qāsim was a great personality of the *khayr al-qurūn* (best of eras), and the further away we are going from that era, the more pride, arrogance, self-conceit and haughtiness are increasing not only in the masses, but among the *'ulamā'* as well. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

We are now quoting a few letters which Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf had written to Muhammad in Qāsim. These

are quoted to serve as lessons and admonitions. They are quoted from *Tārīkh Hind* of Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Pālanpūrī.

Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf writes to Muhammad ibn Qāsim

Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf Thaqafī, the governor of Iraq, was so engrossed with the jihād in Sindh that it seemed as though he was personally in command of the army. His post would go to Sindh every third day. We now quote a few letters which he wrote to Muhammad ibn Qāsim on different occasions, teaching him the principles of governance and integrity, and instructing him to adhere to them. He also explains to him how to deal with the inhabitants of Sindh, and their wealth and properties.

Hajjāj wrote to him on receiving the good news of the conquest of Dībal

"Once you have taken control of the land, fortified the forts, and fulfilled the needs of the army, spend all the money and treasures for the betterment and welfare of the populace. Remember: the well-being and affluence of the farmers, craftsmen, businessmen and tradesmen will ensure the progress and growth of the country. Show due consideration to the general population so that they are inclined with love towards you." (*Ā'inah-e-Haqīqat Numā*, p. 104)

He received the following letter from Hajjāj when he was in Bīrūn

"Treat the people of Bīrūn with utmost leniency and affection, and try to win them over. You should certainly guarantee peace to the fighters who request it. If the senior leaders of a place come to meet you, wear your best clothes and treat them with honour. Let your intelligence and wisdom be your guide. When you make a promise, ensure you fulfil it so that the inhabitants of Sindh have total confidence in your words and actions." (*Ā'inah-e-Haqīqat Numā*, p. 104)

He received the following letter after the conquest of Sewistān

"If anyone asks you for land, give it to him and do not let him lose hope. Satisfy the population through peace and pardon."

The four foundations of a sultanate

1. Tolerance, pardon and love.
2. Generosity and munificence.
3. To be fully aware of the psychology of your enemies, and not to allow your emotions to get the better of your intellect in your enmity towards them.
4. Strength and astuteness.

Keep to the covenants which you make with the rajahs. When they agree to make payments [in

return for peace], cooperate with them and help them in this regard. When you have to send an envoy to any place, gauge and assess his intelligence and integrity first. Preserve and uphold the wealth, property, honour and esteem of the one who attests to the oneness of Allāh *taʿālā* and obedience to you. As for the one who does not accept Islam, impose on him only to the extent that he obeys you. As for the one who rebels against you, you must be prepared to fight him. Differentiate between the noble and ignoble. Do not allow your making peace with the enemy to be misconstrued as a sign of weakness by them. (*Ā'inah-e-Haqīqat Numā*, p. 104)

Note: (1) This edict clearly states that some people will receive plots of land. This will be given from the lands which were taken over by the government or un-owned forests, jungles, etc. Lands which are owned by people will not be taken away from their ownership. This is mentioned further on in the letter.

(2) To cooperate with them and help them in the case where they agree to pay the *kharāj* shows that the lands and properties which were owned by the inhabitants of Sindh were not taken away from them. Rather, their ownership was upheld and recognized. If not, they would not have been asked to pay *kharāj*.

When Muhammad ibn Qāsim crossed the river and went to battle against Rajah Dāhir, he received the following letter from Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf.

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"You must not display any laziness in performing the five salāhs. Beseech and cry before Allāh *taʿālā* in the *takbīr, qirā'ah, qiyām, quʿūd, rukūʿ* and *sujūd* (the different postures of salāh). The *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā* must be on your tongue all the time. A person cannot acquire strength and power without the mercy of Allāh *taʿālā*. If you rely on Allāh's grace and kindness, you will certainly be victorious." (*Ā'inah-e-Haqīqat Numā*, p. 105)

Note: These guidelines are not from a righteous caliph or pious ruler. Rather, it comes from the one who is considered to be the most tyrant person in the Islamic world, the one who is well known as a *fāsiq* (flagrant sinner) and *fājir* (immoral person). But he too was convinced that the victory and success of the Muslim nation can only be achieved with obedience to Allāh *taʿālā*, especially with strict adherence to salāh. (Maulānā Muhammad Pālanpūrī: *Tārīkh Hind*, p. 19)

Demise

He passed away in 98 A.H./717 C.E. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Islāmī Encyclopaedia*, p. 1420)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān as-Sulamī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān. He is more popularly known by his *kunnīyyat*. His father's name was Habīb. He was a Sulamī by lineage.

Merits

He is included among the *qurrā'* (readers) and *ʿulamā'* of Kūfah, and is a Tābiʿī.

Qur'ān

The Qur'ān was his speciality. He was both a *qārī* and scholar of the Qur'ān. He learnt the science of *qirā'ah* from Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and his father. He learnt the *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān from *ʿulamā'* who were so studious in its study that they would learn ten verses, and not proceed to the next ten until they learnt everything about the first ten. Together with studying the Qur'ān, he would act on its teachings. He used to say: "While studying the Qur'ān, we would learn on how to practise on it. There will come such people after us who will swallow the Qur'ān as they swallow water but it will not go down their throats."

It is gauged from a statement of Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* that he studied under Hadrat ʿUthmān, ʿAlī and ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Qur'ān lessons

He used to conduct Qur'ān lessons but did not like to take any remuneration for it. He taught the Qur'ān to the son of 'Amr ibn Hurayth. 'Amr sent him a riding camel together with its body clothes. He sent it back saying: "We do not accept any wage for the Book of Allāh." He conducted Qur'ān lessons in a musjid for forty years without accepting any wage for it.

Hadīth

He was also a *hāfiz* of Hadīth. 'Allāmah Ibn Sa'd *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was a reliable narrator who narrated many Ahādīth."

Demise

He passed away in Kūfah in 73 A.H. during the caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik. He virtually lived in the musjid, and was in it even when he was on his death-bed. 'Atā' ibn Sā'ib went and said to him: "May Allāh *ta'ālā* have mercy on you. It would have been better had you shifted to your bed." He replied: "I heard a person saying that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to say: 'A person is considered to be in salāh for as long as he remains in the musjid waiting for the salāh to commence. And the angels make *du'ā'* for his mercy. This is why I desire to die in the musjid." (*Tābi'īn*, p. 543)

Hadrat Muslim ibn Yasār *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muslim and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh. He was a slave of the famous Sahābī, Hadrat Talhah ibn ʿUbaydillāh *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

Merits

Hadrat Talhah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* is from the ʿAsharah Mubashsharah (the ten Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* who were given glad tidings of Paradise in this world). He combined knowledge with practice. Muslim ibn Yasār *rahimahullāh* was filled with the wealth of knowledge and practice by virtue of being his slave and living in the city of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Noble character

His actions were more than his knowledge. Ibn Saʿd *rahimahullāh* refers to him as an ardent worshipper and ascetic. Ibn Hibbān *rahimahullāh* refers to him as one of the ardent worshippers of Basra.

The prerequisite of *īmān*

He was of the opinion that abstaining from all reprehensible things was a prerequisite of *īmān* in Allāh *taʿālā*. He used to say: "I do not understand how a person's *īmān* will benefit him if he does not give up the things which Allāh *taʿālā* dislikes."

Engrossment in salāh

His salāh used to be performed with much concentration and engrossment. When he used to stand up for salāh, it would seem as if illumination (*nūr*) was being instilled into him. Hadrat Ibn ʿAun says: "He appeared like a lifeless stick when he used to be in salāh. You will not see the slightest movement in his body and clothes. No matter how dangerous and disturbing a thing would occur while he was in salāh, it would not affect him in the least. He was performing salāh on one occasion when his side caught on fire and became extinguished by itself. But he had no knowledge of it in the least.

Seeing to the needs of the musjid was his special occupation. He would light the lamps in the musjid. Consequently, he was referred to as Muslim al-Misbāh (Muslim, the lighter of the lamp).

Respect for the Qur'ān

He was extremely respectful of the Qur'ān and would never touch an impure place with the hand which was used to touch the Qur'ān. He used to say: "I dislike touching my private part with my right hand because I use it to carry the Qur'ān."

Ostentation and ignorance are the tools of Satan

He considered ostentation and ignorance to be the tools of Satan. He used to say: "Beware of ostentation because it is a time of an *ʿālim's*

ignorance. Satan causes a person to slip and err because of it."

Forbearance and tolerance

He was extremely forbearing and tolerant by nature. Even when angered, he would not utter any inappropriate thing. He was never abusive or vulgar towards anyone. When he was overtaken by anger, the harshest thing which he would say would be: "You should now sever ties from me." When he uttered these words, people understood that there was no level of anger after this.

Demise

He passed away in 100 A.H. or 101 A.H. during the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh*. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 481)

Hadrat Sālim ibn ʿAbdillāh *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Sālim and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿUmar. He was the son of Hadrat ʿAbdullāh *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* who was the son of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. The maternal side of his family was just as illustrious as his paternal side. During the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, the daughters of Yazdgird (the king of Iran) were captured, and one of them was given to Hadrat ʿAbdullāh *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Sālim *rahimahullāh* was her son. In this way, the blood of the royal family of Iran was also in his veins.

Fiqh

Fiqh was his special field of expertise and he was an imām in this field. Some imāms of *fiqh*, including Ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh* used to include him among the seven famous jurists of Madīnah. His greatest accolade in the field of *fiqh* was that he was a distinguished member of the group of jurists in Madīnah who used to issue *fatāwā*.

Abstinence and piety

Hadrat Sālim's *rahimahullāh* knowledge was matched by his actions. Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* used to say: "There was no one who was similar to the pious predecessors in abstinence and asceticism apart from Sālim

ra<u>h</u>imahullāh." Imām Nawawī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*, <u>H</u>āfi<u>z</u> Dhahabī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* and other biographers unanimously acknowledge his abstinence and asceticism.

<u>Extreme caution</u>

He was extremely cautious in every matter. He disliked a matter which had the slightest taint of deception. There was a fabric known as *sath gazā* (seven metres fabric) which was quite popular in his time. It used to be slightly less than seven metres but it was known as *sath gazā*. Marwān ibn Jubayr, a cloth merchant, relates: "<u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Sālim came to buy some fabric on one occasion. I opened the *sath gazā* before him, and it was slightly less than seven metres. He said to me: "But you said it is seven metres!?" I replied: "Yes, but people refer to this as *sath gazā*." He said: "This is how deception always starts."

<u>Independence from the wealth of the rich</u>

He did not like presenting needs to anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. As for the wealth, riches and attractions of the rich, he was so independent of all this that even if they offered him anything, he would not express any wish. Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik used to honour him a lot. He would go to his assembly in ordinary clothes which were made of coarse fabric. Hishām would seat him near him on the royal throne while he was wearing these simple clothes. He came for <u>h</u>ajj one year, and the two met near the Kaʿbah. Hishām said to him: "Tell me whatever needs you

have." He replied: "I will not ask anyone [apart from Allāh *taʿālā*] while I am in His House."

Advice and admonition

His words of advice and admonition used to be impactful and heart-rending. ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* wrote to him asking him to note some *masā'il* of ʿUmar ibn Khattāb *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He sent the following reply: "O ʿUmar! You must think of the kings who lost the light of their eyes which were never satisfied with the joy of looking. Those stomachs which burst open which were never satisfied with various types of foods. Today they are all lying dead beneath the earth. Had they been near us, we would not have been able to tolerate the stench which emanates from their corpses."

Demise

He passed away in Dhū al-Hijjah 106 A.H. in Madīnah. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 134)

Hadrat Sulaymān ibn Tarkhān Taymī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Sulaymān, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muʿtamir, and he is a Murrī by lineage. But he had settled down among the Banū Taym, and therefore came to be known as Taymī. He was a senior worshipper and ascetic Tābiʿī of Basra.

Merits

Although his high status was because of his abstinence, asceticism, spiritual exercises and worship; he was also a senior *ʿālim* of Basra. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* mentions him by the titles: Hāfiz, Imām and Shaykh al-Islam.

Hadīth

He was a distinguished *hāfiz* of Hadīth. ʿAllāmah Ibn Saʿd *rahimahullāh* refers to him as a reliable narrator who narrated many Ahādīth. The senior Hadīth scholars of his time acknowledged his acumen in Hadīth. Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh* used to say: "There are three *huffāz* of Hadīth in Basra." The name of Sulaymān was included in this list.

Asceticism and abstinence

His essential excellence lied in his asceticism, abstinence, worship, and spiritual exercises. ʿAllāmah Ibn Saʿd *rahimahullāh* writes that he was an extremely ardent worshipper. Ibn ʿImād

Hambalī *rahimahullāh* writes that he was an ardent worshipper and an abstinent person who used to spend his night in worship and day in fasting, and an obedient slave of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Submission before Allāh *taʿālā*

The fear of Allāh *taʿālā* was flowing in his veins and bones. Yahyā al-Qattān *rahimahullāh* writes: "I have not seen anyone more fearful of Allāh *taʿālā* than Sulaymān."

Worship and spiritual exercises

He would spend entire nights in worship. In most cases, he would perform the *fajr salāh* with the *wudū'* of *ʿishā*. His son, Muʿtamir, was a true replica of his father. Father and son would spend the entire night going from one musjid to another to perform salāh in them. Muʿtamir says that he performed the *fajr salāh* with the *wudū'* of *ʿishā* for forty years. In every *sajdah* (prostration), he would say *Sub-hāna Rabbiyal Aʿlā* seventy times. He would remain in the *tasbīh* (glorification of Allāh *taʿālā*) from *ʿasr* to *maghrib*. He had the same enthusiasm for fasting. According to some narrations, he used to fast daily, while other narrations state that he used to alternate between fasting one day and not fasting the next.

Charity

He used to give a lot in charity. Jarīr states that Sulaymān used to give in charity all the time. If he did not find anything which he could give as charity, he would perform two *rakʿats* of salāh.

In short, every moment of his life was spent in good deeds. Hammād ibn Salamah says: "When we used to go to Sulaymān when it was the time of worshipping Allāh *taʿālā*, we would certainly find him in His obedience. It seemed as though he did not even have any capacity to disobey Allāh *taʿālā*."

Fear of being taken to task

Despite leading such a life, he did not rely on his deeds, and feared what will happen to him when brought before Allāh *taʿālā*. Hadrat Fudayl ibn ʿIyād *rahimahullāh* relates that someone said to Sulaymān: "You are the most unique person. Can there be anyone like you?" He replied: "Do not say such a thing. I do not know how my Allāh *taʿālā* is going to treat me." He himself said:

بَلْ بَدَا لَهُمْ مِّنَ اللهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُوْنُوْا يَحْتَسِبُوْنَ

"And there will appear before them, from Allāh, what they did not even imagine." (Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 47)

He feared being taken to task over the most trivial matters. Hadrat Saʿīd ibn ʿĀmir *rahimahullāh* relates: "Sulaymān *rahimahullāh* fell ill on one occasion, and he began crying. Someone asked him the reason for his crying, so he said: 'I passed by a Qadarī (a person who rejects *taqdīr*) on one occasion and made *salām* to him. I fear being taken to task for this.'"

Note: We learn from this that we must be cautious about intermingling with people who have incorrect beliefs.

Enjoining good and forbidding evil

Enjoining good and forbidding evil is a very meritorious deed. Sulaymān *rahimahullāh* considered it to be an essential obligation. He would go to the palaces and mansions of the rich and fulfil this obligation.

One point

No era was devoid of individuals and groups which did not hanker after ease. These days we find every person looking for ease in religion. People like this do not consider it necessary to confine one's self to one particular school of thought. They provide this as proof: When all the imāms are on truth, their opinions are correct, and their school is right; why is it necessary to confine one's self to and adhere to one particular school? Why should we not select all those rulings of theirs which are easy on the basis of *ad-dīnu yusrun* (religion is easy)? Sulaymān *rahimahullāh* used to provide a heartening point on the harms of this desire for ease. He used to say: "If you were to follow all the concessions of the *'ulamā'* and choose their slip-ups, all evils will accumulate within you."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent point which ought to be borne in mind especially in today's times.

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Demise

He passed away in 143 A.H. He was 57 years old at the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 182)

Hadrat Masrūq ibn Ajdaʿ *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Masrūq and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿĀ'ishah. His father's family name was Ajdaʿ, and Islamic name was ʿAbd ar-Rahmān.

Islam

Masrūq lived during the era of *jāhilīyyah* and Islam. He was present during the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Other members of his family had embraced Islam during this time. A close relative of his, ʿAmr ibn Maʿdikariba, had personally went to Madīnah and embraced Islam at the hands of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Masrūq was deprived of this honour.

Merits

On the academic level, he was from the *ʿulamā'* of Tābiʿīn. He had a thirst for knowledge from a young age. Shaʿbī said that there was no one who had a greater thirst for knowledge than him. He was fortunate to have found an affectionate and learned "mother" like Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* who treated and loved him like a son. According to some narrations, we learn that she adopted him

Fiqh and *fatwā*

Fiqh was his speciality and he was an imām and *mujtahid* in it.

The judiciary

Based on his juristical acumen, he possessed special expertise in the judiciary, and he also enjoyed it. He had so much of interest in it that he used to say: "Passing a correct and honest judgement in a case is more beloved to me than waging jihād in Allāh's cause for one year."

Fear of Allāh *taʿālā*

The fear of Allāh *taʿālā* is the fountainhead of all excellent character. Hadrat Masrūq *rahimahullāh* considered the fear of Allāh *taʿālā* to be the fundamental knowledge. And he considered haughtiness in deeds to be ignorance. He used to say: "Fearing Allāh *taʿālā* is sufficient knowledge for a person. And ignorance is when he is proud over his actions."

Worship and spiritual exercises

He was an ardent worshipper who engaged in many spiritual exercises. He would perform salāh to the extent that his feet would become swollen.

Repentance and seeking forgiveness

He would take stock of his self, think of his sins, and then consider seeking forgiveness for them to be essential. He used to say: "A man should have certain assemblies for his self wherein he thinks of his sins and seeks forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā*."

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Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent piece of advice which ought to be carried out by all of us.

The reality of this world

The world had no value at all in his eyes. He did not consider it to be any more valuable than a dunghill. He held his nephew by his hand on one occasion and took him to a dunghill, and said: "Do you want to see the world? Look, this is the world which we eat and bury, wear until it is worn out, ride until it is incapacitated. We shed blood, considered the prohibitions of Allāh *taʿālā* to be lawful, and severed family ties [for this world]."

His heart was never inclined towards the world, and he was never attracted to any worldly item. People would offer to serve him, but he would refuse. Khālid ibn Usayd sent 30 000 dirhams to him, but he refused to accept it. His relatives tried to convince him to accept this amount so that he could give it in charity, spend it on relatives, and use it for other good causes. But he refused blankly.

Reliance and contentment

His independent attitude would occasionally cause him to suffer poverty, but he would never lose his reliance in Allāh *taʿālā*. On one occasion, there was no food in the house. His wife said to him: "O father of ʿĀ'ishah! Your wife and children have nothing to eat today." On hearing this, Masrūq smiled and said: "By Allāh, He will

certainly make arrangements for their sustenance."

Statements

1. He was stolen when he was an infant. When he was found, he was named "Masrūq" (an item which is stolen). He used to say: "A believer has sufficient knowledge if it causes him to fear Allāh *taʿālā*."

2. "When a person reaches the age of forty, he must certainly adopt a life of fear for Allāh *taʿālā* and piety."

He used to perform salāh to the extent that his feet would get swollen. He used to place a curtain between himself and his family, become occupied in salāh, and separate himself from his family and worldly matters. In other words, he would have no contact with them.

He would pass judgement in people's cases but never took any wage for it. He used to say: "These days, there is nothing better than caution and abstention for a believer." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 28)

Demise

He passed away in 63 A.H. in Wasat and was buried there. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 468)

Hadrat Salamah ibn Dīnār *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Salamah and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Hāzim. He was a non-Arab. His father, Dīnār, was an Iranian, and his mother was a Roman. He was a slave of Ibn Saʿd ibn Abī Sufyān Makhzūmī, and this is why he is also known as Makhzūmī.

Merits

Although he was a non-Arab from his paternal and maternal sides, the Islamic teachings of equality made him one of the seniors of Madīnah, and included him in the group of ascetic *ʿulamā'*. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* refers to him as:

الواعظ الزاهد عالم المدينة وشيخها

"An advisor, ascetic, ʿālim of Madīnah, and it's shaykh."

Imām Nawawī *rahimahullāh* writes: "All scholars unanimously acknowledge his reliability and greatness, and they all speak highly about him."

Fiqh

He was an expert in the field of *fiqh* and he was a famous jurist of Madīnah. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* and Imām Nawawī *rahimahullāh* include him in the list of jurists. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes that he was a jurist of the

soul, he has many merits, he was a jurist whose opinions were quoted as proofs, and he was a high ranking person. One proof of his juristical acumen is that he was a judge in Madīnah.

He also fulfilled the responsibilities of advising and admonishing in Madīnah.

Abstinence and worship

Due to his worship and spiritual exercises, he was included among the righteous (*sulahā'*) of Madīnah. Ibn Hibbān *rahimahullāh* says that he was an ardent worshipper and ascetic of Madīnah. Hāfiz Dhahabī, Imām Nawawī, Ibn Hajar and other scholars attach the title "Zāhid" (ascetic) to his name. In short, he was a distinguished Tābi'ī in every respect. Muhammad ibn Is-hāq ibn Khuzaymah says that there was no one like him in his time.

Independence from the rulers

He always remained independent from the rulers and leaders. He never tolerated submitting himself in their court. Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik [the caliph] summoned him on one occasion via Imām Zuhrī *rahimahullāh*. He said to Zuhrī: "If he has any work with me, he ought to come to me himself. I have no work with him."

Note: A similar incident is related in the books with regard to Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*. A *Nawāb Sāhib* expressed his wish to meet him and invited

him to his place. He replied: “He wants to meet me, and I must go to him!?”

Wisdom and intelligence

Together with spiritual and moral excellences, he was bestowed with a lot of wisdom. ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Zayd ibn Aslam said: “I did not see anyone uttering better words of wisdom than Abū Hāzim.” Ibn Khuzaymah said: “No one could match him in his words of wisdom and exhortations.”

Words of wisdom

The level of his wisdom can be gauged from some of his wise statements.

1. “Give up all those deeds which cause you to dislike death. Then when death comes to you, you will not experience any loss.”

2. “If a person fulfils his duties and relations with Allāh *taʿālā*, Allāh *taʿālā* will set right his relations with people. But if a person is lacking in fulfilling his duties to Allāh *taʿālā*, He will cause people to fail in fulfilling their responsibilities to him.”

3. “It is better to have good relations with a single person than to have relations with many people while failing to fulfil their rights.”

4. The caliph Hishām asked him: “How can I save myself from being taken to account for my

responsibilities in the running of the country?" He replied: "It is very easy. Take every single thing in a lawful manner, and spend it in a lawful manner." Hishām said: "This can only be accomplished by a person whom Allāh *taʿālā* inspired to safeguard himself from the desires of his self." (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 179)

Note: Look at the comprehensive and restraining reply given by Hadrat Salamah *rahimahullāh*. The acumen of Hishām is also displayed when he understood its importance and said that it is not easy to practise on it unless Allāh's *taʿālā* help and inspiration is present.

Demise

He passed away in 140 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Safwān ibn Sulaym Zuhrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Safwān, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh. There is difference of opinion with regard to his father's name. Some say Sulaym, and others say Sālim. He was a distinguished Tābiʿī of Madīnah.

Merits

Although his excellence lied in his asceticism and abstention, his academic merits were not in any way inferior. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* refers to him as a reliable narrator, a proof, and one of the personalities of guidance.

Hadīth

He studied Hadīth under the following personalities: ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Abū Umāmah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Saʿīd ibn Musayyib, ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Ghanm, Abū Salamah ibn ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Saʿīd ibn Salamah, ʿAbdullāh ibn Sulaymān al-Agharr, ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Saʿd, ʿAtā' ibn Yasār and others.

Zayd ibn Aslam, Ibn Munkadir, Mūsā ibn ʿUqbah, Ibn Jurayj, Yazīd ibn Abī Habīb, Mālik ibn Anas and other senior *ʿulamā'* were his students.

Fiqh

He was also an expert in *fiqh* and he was included among the jurists of Madīnah. Ibn ʿImād Hambalī refers to him as *al-faqīh al-qudwah* (a leading jurist).

Worship and spiritual exercises

Abstinence, asceticism, worship and spiritual exercises were his distinguishing qualities. He did not occupy himself in anything else. Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* used to say: "He was an excellent slave of Allāh *taʿālā*. People used to make *duʿā'* for rain through his *wasīlah* (means)."

Note: This shows that it is permissible to make *duʿā'* through the *wasīlah* of a pious slave of Allāh *taʿālā*.

He used to engage in excessive and arduous worship. He feared becoming overcome by sleep, so he used to engage in worship on an open roof in winter, and in a closed room in summer. In this way, the cold and the heat would prevent him from falling asleep. His feet would swell from lengthy salāh, and he would fall down from fatigue. His constant prostrations injured his forehead.

Abū Hamzah *rahimahullāh* relates: "Safwān had reached such a high level of worship that if he was told that the day of Resurrection is tomorrow, he could not have done any more worship."

Note: This shows that excessive worship is not a *bidʿah*.

Spending in Allāh's cause

He was so enthusiastic about spending in Allāh's cause that he would even remove the garments which he was wearing and give them in charity. He came out of the musjid on a bitterly cold night. He saw a man without any clothes. So he immediately removed his clothes and gave them to the man.

Independence from the wealth of this world

He was so independent and self-sufficient that he would refuse the services of the rulers and authorities. He used to remain in worship in Musjid-e-Nabawī. Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik came to Madīnah once and went to visit Musjid-e-Nabawī with Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh*. When they opened the Maqsūrah door after the *zuhr salāh*, they saw Safwān there. Sulaymān did not know him, so he asked ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz: "Who is this man? I have not seen better effects on a person's body than on his." ʿUmar replied: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! This is Safwān ibn Sulaym." On hearing his name, Sulaymān immediately ordered one of his slaves to give him a bag containing 500 dīnārs. The slave went and presented the bag to him saying: "This is a gift from the Amīr al-Mu'minīn. He is present here." Safwān *rahimahullāh* said: "You are probably confused. He must have asked you to give it to someone else." The slave asked: "Are

you not Safwān?" He replied: "I am certainly him." The slave said: "Then it is certainly for you." He said: "Go back and confirm it." The moment the slave left to confirm it, Safwān picked up his shoes and left the musjid. He was not to be seen for as long as Sulaymān remained in the musjid.

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is true contentment and independence from people. This is worthy of emulation for all of us. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us.

Demise

He passed away in 132 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 203)

Hadrat Safwān ibn Mihraz al-Māzinī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Safwān and his lineage goes to the Banī Māzin which was a branch of the Banū Tamīm tribe. He was an ardent worshipper and ascetic Tābiʿī of Basra.

Merits

He did not hold any distinguished position in the field of knowledge, but at the same time, he was not totally devoid of it. He was included among the practising *ʿulamā'* of Basra. ʿAllāmah Ibn Saʿd *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was a high ranking and ascetic person." Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes: "Safwān ibn Mihraz al-Māzinī was one of the practising *ʿulamā'*."

He heard Hadīth from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar, Ibn Masʿūd, Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū Mūsā Ashʿarī, ʿImrān ibn Husayn, Hakīm ibn Hizām and other senior Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Abū Hamzah, Jāmiʿ ibn Shaddād, Khālid ibn ʿAbdillāh al-Ashbah, ʿĀsim al-Ahwal, Qatādah, Muhammad ibn Wāsiʿ, ʿAlī ibn Zayd ibn Jadʿān and others were his students.

Level of actions

Safwān *rahimahullāh* considered knowledge alone to be of no significance as long as it was not

accompanied with actions. He used to say: "We cannot derive any benefit from knowledge as long as we do not practise on it. I wish I did not know anything."

Abstinence and worship

His entire life was a practical example of the above-quoted principle. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* writes that Safwān *rahimahullāh* was an ardent worshipper from the Tābiʿīn.

A soft heart

The mirror of the soul glitters by the heat of tears, and the orchard of the heart becomes green and lush when it is irrigated by tears. Safwān's eyes were like burning lamps. He set aside a corner or a cave wherein he would go and cry. He would only leave this place at the times of salāh. The moment he completed his salāh, he would return [to his place of seclusion].

Dhikr

His *dhikr* and spiritual exercises was in the form of reciting Ahādīth. Jarīr narrates that Safwān and his brother would get together to discuss Hadīth. When they did not experience any emotion and soft-heartedness, those present would request him to relate Ahādīth. The moment he uttered the words *al-hamdulillāh*, the people would experience a strange feeling, and their eyes would flow with tears as water flows from a water-skin.

Note: The crying and beseeching of the speaker caused the audience to be affected in this way.

Night worship

The night was the special time for his worship. He was very particular about the *tahajjud salāh*.

Aloofness from the world

He never soiled himself with the world and its attractions. He used to say: "If I receive a piece of bread with which I can remain healthy, and a glass of water to drink, then I have no need for this world and the people of this world.

He did not consider the world to be any more than a traveller's lodge. He did not build a proper house for himself. He had a shack in which he lived, and which he did not even bother to repair. One of its timbers broke on one occasion. People advised him to repair it. He replied: "I have to die tomorrow, had the actual owner of the house [i.e. Allāh *taʿālā*] given me the opportunity to live longer in it, I would have repaired it.

Respect for the musjid

He considered it very disrespectful to make a noise in the musjid. He would leave the musjid when he witnessed such incidents. Some people were fighting in the musjid, he left it saying: "You people are very quarrelsome."

Consideration for the teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*

He respected the teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* right until his death. When he was on his death-bed, he said to his family members: "You must remember the teaching of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*: there must be no wailing women, and no one pulling hairs and tearing clothes from among us."

He passed away during this illness. His date of death is not certain. Ibn Hibbān says that he passed way in 174 A.H. but this is not worthy of consideration. (*Tābiʿīn*, p. 205)

Hadrat ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Abī Laylā *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿĪsā. His father's name is Yasār and his *kunnīyyat* was Abū Laylā. His father was known by his *kunnīyyat*. His lineage is: ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Yasār ibn Bilāl ibn Balīl ibn Ahīhah ibn al-Hallāj ibn al-Hīrīsh ibn Jahjabān ibn Kulfah ibn ʿAuf ibn ʿAmr ibn ʿAuf Ausī Ansārī.

Ibn Abī Laylā was a distinguished Tābiʿī as regards his knowledge. His father, Abū Laylā, was a Sahābī who had the honour of joining Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in jihād in many battles. He settled down in Kūfah, and was martyred in the battle of Siffīn in defence of Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān was born in the middle of the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

Merits

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān held a lofty academic position. He was fortunate to live in an era wherein there was a large number of Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. He met 120 Ansār Sahābah and benefited from the company of many of them. Their blessings filled ʿAbd ar-Rahmān with the treasure of knowledge. ʿAllāmah Nawawī *rahimahullāh* says that all scholars attested to his

reliability and seniority. He was an expert in Qur'ān, Hadīth, *fiqh* and other sciences.

Qur'ān

He had a special interest in *qirā'ah* and always had a group of *qurrā'* (plural of *qāri*). Mujāhid relates that he had a special place wherein he had many copies of the Qur'ān. There was always an assembly of *qurrā'* in this place, and they would only leave it for meals.

Classes

His knowledge of Hadīth was so broad and accepted that even Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* would attend his classes and listen to Hadīth from him. 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr relates: "I saw several Sahābah in 'Abd ar-Rahmān's classes, one of them was Barā'. They would remain silent, listening to Ahādīth from him."

Hadīth

He considered mutual discussion and reminder to be necessary for the memorization of Hadīth. He himself would conduct special sessions for this, and advise others to do the same.

Fiqh and the judiciary

He was also an expert in *fiqh*. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* refers to him as an imām and a *faqīh* (jurist). His juristical acumen was well-accepted. Consequently, when Hajjāj wanted to organize the judiciary in Kūfah, he selected 'Abd

ar-Rahmān to the post of judge. His police officer, Haushab, was opposed to his selection and said to Hajjāj: "If you want to appoint ʿAlī ibn Abī Tālib to this post, then you can appoint him." (In other words, he will oppose you in the same way). Hajjāj did not pay heed to him and appointed ʿAbd ar-Rahmān. But he removed him after a short time because of certain differences.

Caution

He was very cautious in giving replies to *fatāwā*. He used to say: "I have seen 120 Ansārī Sahābah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. When any of them was asked a question, he would try to avoid giving an answer so that someone else may give it. But now the situation is such that people are fighting against each other to give replies."

Note: This is a statement of a Tābiʿī describing the situation in his time. Just think what the situation must be like today!? The most ignorant person will not hesitate in giving a reply. Instead, he will be very bold and audacious in this regard. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Simplicity

He was very simple by nature and abhorred formalities. A person offered him a cloth to wipe himself after performing *wudū'*, but he cast it aside.

Note: He probably did this so that the effects of *wudū'* remain for as long as possible. Close associates should therefore not insist on a person. However, if a person feels the need or has a reason to wipe, there is no harm in it.

An excellent example

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān was an ʿAlawī. In other words, he gave preference to Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* over Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. A contemporary by the name of ʿAbdullāh ibn Hakīm was an ʿUthmānī. Despite this difference in belief, they both used to perform salāh in the same musjid, and never discussed or debated the issue of who of the two Sahābah is more superior.

Note: This was also the preferred practice of our pious elders. But today, some people seem to find enjoyment solely in falling into debates and arguments.

Demise

He became fed up with the tyrannies of Hajjāj and joined Ibn Ashʿath in opposition to Hajjāj. He was either killed or drowned in the ensuing battle. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tābiʿīn*)

Maulānā Akbar Shāh Najībādādī writes in his famous book, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, that Ibn Ashʿath's war against Hajjāj took place several times between the years 81 A.H. and 84 A.H. (*Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 2, p. 156)

We learn from this that Hadrat ʻAbd ar-Rahmān *rahimahullāh* passed away between 81 A.H. and 84 A.H. May Allāh *taʻālā* illuminate his grave.

Hadrat Zādhān Abū ʿAmr Kindī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Zādhān and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAmr Kindī or Abū ʿAbdillāh.

He is from among those fortunate Tābiʿīn who have the honour of narrating from Hadrat ʿAlī, ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd, Jarīr, Salmān Fārsī, Barā' and other Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

ʿUbaydullāh ibn Kathīr relates: "I saw Zādhān walking by on the day of ʿĪd and he was fully engaged in saying *Allāhu Akbar, Lā ilāha illallāh*, and other forms of *dhikr*."

He said the following while making *duʿā'*: "O Allāh! I am hungry." The moment he said this, a bread from a shelf in the wall fell before him."

Note: This is a clear miracle (*karāmat*) of his, and proves his genuineness.

Definition of a bankrupt person

ʿĪzār ibn ʿAmr relates: "Zādhān and I proceeded towards the graveyard on the day of ʿĪd. On the way, they saw the winds causing the curtains of the *hājīs* to flutter. On seeing this, he pointed towards a person and said: 'By Allāh, this man is bankrupt.' I said to him: 'Hadrat, how can you say he is bankrupt when he is so wealthy!?' He

replied: 'But he is bankrupt with regard to his *Dīn*.'"

Statements

1. Abū Karmah says that Zādhān was asked for an explanation of the verse:

وَإِنَّ لِلَّذِيْنَ عَذَابًا دُوْنَ ذَلِكَ

"For them is a punishment apart from that."

He said: "It refers to punishment of the grave."

2. "The person who recites the Qur'ān to enrapture the people, gain control over them, and take money from them, will appear on the day of Resurrection without having a single piece of flesh on his face."

Note: This proves the reprehensibility of ostentation.

3. Zādhān relates: Hadrat 'Ā'ishah *radiyallāhu 'anhā* said: 'A poor woman came to me and offered me something which she wanted to give as a gift. But on seeing her poverty, I did not feel it appropriate to accept her gift.' Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: 'It would have been so nice if you accepted her gift and given her something in return.' He added: 'It seems as if you considered her gift to be very ordinary, and that is why you did not accept it. O 'Ā'ishah! Listen! Be humble because Allāh *ta'ālā* loves

those who are humble. And He dislikes those who are proud.'"

Note: Glory to Allāh! What excellent advice from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It is not only an advice, but a reprimand which is an excellent example for the *murshidīn* (spiritual guides). May Allāh *taʿālā* give us *taufīq* (inspiration).

Demise

He passed away in 82 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, p. 213)

Hadrat Abū ʿImrān al-Jaunī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿImrān, and his name is ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Habīb Basrī.

Merits

He would awaken those who were sleeping in the dreams of heedlessness, and chase away Satan. He was a conscious and alert admonisher. Ibn Maʿīn and others consider him to be a reliable narrator. He is a Tābiʿī who has the honour of meeting a group of Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and listening to Hadīth from them. For example, Hadrat Anas ibn Mālik *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and others.

Statements

1. "Every approaching night announces: 'Do as much good in me as possible because I will never return to you.'"

2. "I have been told: When animals will look at humans being divided into two groups before Allāh *taʿālā* – one group for Paradise and the other for Hell – they will address the humans and say: 'O humans! All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* who did not make us like you – we neither have hope for Paradise nor fear of Hell.'"

3. “The person whose heart constantly thinks of death will feel he has more than what he deserves of worldly possessions.”

Demise

He passed away in 123 A.H. or 128 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Hilyatul Auliyā’*, vol. 8, p. 278)

Hadrat Imām Rabīʿatur Ra'y *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Rabīʿah and his title was Ra'y. His father's name was Farrūkh who was a slave of the Banū Tamīm ibn Hiyarah tribe. Rabīʿah was born to the house of this slave, and he later became an ʿAllāmah of his time.

Merits

He was a Tābiʿī and his academic acumen was accepted by all *ʿulamā'* and Hadīth scholars. ʿAllāmah Nawawī *rahimahullāh* writes: "All the *ʿulamā'* and Hadīth scholars acknowledge his seniority, and his academic and intellectual acumen." Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was an imām, a *hāfiz*, a *faqīh* (jurist), and *mujtahid*. He had a special insight in *ra'y* (opinions) and this is why he was known as Rabīʿatur Ra'y."

Birth and education

His early life and studies are most admonitory and captivating. He was still in his mother's womb when his father, Farrūkh, had to go to Khurāsān for jihād. His father got so occupied in the jihād, that he could not return home for the next 27 years. His mother was a very intelligent woman with much foresight. When Rabīʿah was born, she showed full concern for his education and training. In the absence of her husband, she

turned her full attention to his education and spent all the money which her husband had left behind for this purpose. He had left behind 30 000 dīnārs.

Rabīʿah himself was intelligent and desirous of knowledge. Consequently, he acquired knowledge quite quickly, and became an expert in all sciences while he was still a youth. By the time he was 26 or 27 years old, his popularity had spread far and wide, and people came to him in droves.

His father returned home after 27 years. He knocked on the door, father and son did not know each other. When Rabīʿah came out of the house, he saw a strange man and became angry, saying to him: "O Allāh's enemy! You are trying to attack my house!?" Farrūkh replied: "O Allāh's enemy! You have entered my sanctuary!?" The two raised their voices against each other until they were about to fight each other. On hearing all the noise and clamour, the neighbours gathered around them. They saw Rabīʿah forcing Farrūkh to the ground and saying to him: "By Allāh, I will not leave you until I take you to the judge.' Farrūkh replied in a similar vein. While this was happening, Hadrat Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* happened to reach there, and addressed Farrūkh: "You should go to some other house [this is not your house]." Farrūkh introduced himself saying: "I am the slave of such and such person, my name is Farrūkh, and this is my house." On hearing his voice, his wife emerged

from the house. She recognized him and said to her son: “This is your father.” And said to her husband: “This is your son. You had left me when I was pregnant.” Once the truth emerged, father and son embraced each other and cried profusely.

After coming into the house, Farrūkh asked his wife about the money which he had left behind, and said: “I have 4 000 more dīnārs, these should be included with the previous amount.” His wife had already spent the entire amount for her son’s education. So she said: “There is no need to rush now. The entire amount is buried safely. I will take it out later.”

Rabīʿah already had a large following of students. He used to conduct lessons in Musjid-e-Nabawī *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Senior *ʿulamā’*, leaders and noblemen used to attend his lessons. When it was time to proceed for his lessons, Rabīʿah left for the Musjid as per his habit. His mother recognized that it was time for his lessons, so she said to her husband to go to the musjid, perform salāh, and return. When Farrūkh went to the musjid, he saw a crowd of people around a person. Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*, Hasan ibn Zayd *rahimahullāh*, Abū ʿAlī Lahbī *rahimahullāh* and other nobles and seniors of Madīnah were all present in the lessons. On seeing this crowd, Farrūkh proceeded towards it. People gave him way, but he felt he would be disturbing the lesson, so he lowered his head. He then asked the people: “Who is this personality [who is conducting the lesson here]?”

They replied: “He is Rabīʿah ibn Abī ʿAbdillāh Farrūkh.” On hearing this, he was overcome with joy and said: “Allāh *taʿālā* has bestowed such an honourable position to my son!”

He returned home and said to his wife: “I see your son holding such a high and distinguished position which I never saw before in any jurist.” When his wife heard these words of acknowledgement from him, she said: “Now tell me, what would you like; this lofty and distinguished position of your son or 30 000 dīnārs?” Farrūkh replied: “By Allāh, I prefer the lofty and distinguished position of my son.” His wife said: “So you should know that I spent your entire amount of money for the education of this child.” Farrūkh said: “By Allāh, my treasure has proved to be very profitable.” (*Tārīkh Baghdād* as quoted in *Tābiʿīn* of Shāh Muʿīn ad-Dīn Ahmad Nadwī)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at this righteous woman who made arrangements for the best education and training of her son. If we had mothers like her today, we would have excellent *ʿulamā’* and *sulahā’* who would render sterling services to knowledge and Islam.

Students

He had a very broad circle of students. The following illustrious students are worthy of mention: Imām Mālik, Yahyā Ansārī, Sufyān

Thaurī, Shuʿbah, Layth, Auzāʿī, Ibn Uyaynah, Salmān ibn Hilāl and others *rahimahumullāh*.

An anecdote about eloquent speech

Imām Rabīʿah was a very eloquent speaker. He used to say: "A silent person is in a dream and in a state of dumbness." He used to speak all the time. One day – as was his norm - he was busy in conversation in his assembly. A Bedouin came and continued listening to his talks silently. Rabīʿah thought that the man was getting bewitched by his talks. The eloquence and expressions of the Bedouins is well-known and accepted. Rabīʿah probably wanted to test him, so he asked him: "What is your definition of *balāghah* (eloquence)?" He replied: "To convey your message while using concise words." Rabīʿah asked: "What would you refer to as *ʿajz-e-bayān* (inability to express one's self)?" He replied: "It is what you were busy doing." Rabīʿah was very ashamed by this reply. (Ibn Khalikān as quoted in *Tābiʿīn*, p. 123)

Demise

There are differences of opinion with regard to the year of his death and place of burial. He either passed away in 130 A.H. or 136 A.H. He was either buried in Anbār or in Madīnah Munawwarah. Based on certain proofs, the narration which says that he passed away in 136 A.H. seems to be more authentic. (*Tārīkh Baghdād* as quoted in *Tābiʿīn*, p. 123)

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAun *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAun. He was a slave of ʿAbdullāh ibn Durrah Muzanī.

Worship

Worship was his greatest occupation. After the *fajr salāh*, he would sit in the direction of the *qiblah* and occupy himself in *dhikr*. He would perform *ishrāq salāh* after sunrise and then address the people. He would perform several hundred *rakʿats* of salāh every night. If he missed out any night, he would make up for it during the day. He had a special musjid within the boundaries of his house. Apart from the *maghrib* and *ʿishā salāhs*, he would perform the other three salāhs in this musjid with his sons, brothers and others who were present.

He used to pay particular attention on Fridays and the days of ʿĪd. He would take a bath, wear his best clothes, apply perfume, and would proceed to the musjid – sometimes on foot, and sometimes on an animal. After the completion of the *jumuʿah salāh*, he would return home and complete his remaining optional salāhs. His worship used to increase profusely in Ramadān. After performing the *fard salāh* with congregation, he would return home and engage in worship in solitude. He would occupy himself in repeating

the words *Allāhu Rabbunā* (Allāh is our Sustainer). He would always alternate between fasting one day and not fasting the next. This practice continued without any change until his death. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 263)

Concealing acts of kindness

Bakār ibn Muhammad relates: "Whenever Ibn ʿAun did an act of kindness to a person, he would do it in a concealed manner without anyone coming to know of it. He considered it extremely bad to mention it to others. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 264 – section on the Tābiʿīn)

Character

He was very pleasant, forbearing and soft-natured. He never uttered any unpleasant word on any occasion. Ibn Bakār *rahimahullāh* relates: "I never saw anyone having better control over his tongue than Ibn ʿAun. He was never abusive towards his slave women, slaves, and even his goats and fowls. He loved his jihād camel greatly." (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 265)

Love for Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam

He had intense love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. His greatest desire was to see Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in his dream. Allāh *taʿālā* fulfilled this desire – a few days before he passed away, he was blessed with the honour of seeing Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in his dream. He was so overcome by this honour that he got down from the upper

storey of his house, and proceeded immediately to the musjid. In his joy, he fell down and injured his legs. But he did not treat this injury because it was a reminder of the blessed dream. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 265, section on the Tābiʿīn)

ʿAllāmah Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* narrates that Ibn Bakār used to relate: "I have not seen Ibn ʿAun joking with anyone because he was constantly concerned about his *nafs* and the Hereafter."

Respect for parents

After the *fajr salāh* he would turn towards the *qiblah* and remain engaged in *dhikr* until sunrise. He would then turn towards his companions. He used to wear good clothes and apply perfume. He was very obedient to his parents and would not eat from the same utensil as theirs. When he was asked the reason for this, he said: "I fear their sights may be on a morsel of food and I happen to take it and place it in my mouth." His mother called him for some work on one occasion and he replied in a harsh voice. He then realized his mistake and set free two slaves as an atonement. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 55)

Demise

He passed away in Rajab 151 A.H. There was a large crowd for his funeral. The courtyard of the musjid and attached building was insufficient. His *janāzah* was placed in the *mihrāb* (semi-circular wall at the front of a musjid) and the *janāzah salāh* was performed thereafter. Jamīl

ibn Mahfūz Azdī led the people in the *janāzah salāh*. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, p. 266)

Hadrat Qatādah ibn Diʿāmah *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His *kunnīyyat* was Abū al-Khattāb, and his name was Qatādah ibn Diʿāmah.

Merits

He was blind, and he was included among the *huffāz-e-Hadīth* (those who memorized Ahādīth) and senior personalities. He was a specialist in the field of *tafsīr* and different opinions of the *ʿulamā'*. He had a powerful memory. He was a resident of Basra. Bakr ibn ʿAbdillāh Muzanī says: "If anyone wants to see the person with the best memory of his time, he must look at Qatādah." Qatādah himself says: "Whatever my ears heard was safeguarded by my heart and mind."

He is a Tābiʿī. He narrated Ahādīth from Hadrat Anas ibn Mālik, Hadrat Abū Tufayl, Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Sarjis and other Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Several Tābiʿin such as Sulaymān Taymī, Humayd Tawīl, Ayyūb Sakhtiyānī; and many imams such as Imām Shuʿbah, Imām Auzāʿī and others *rahimahumullāh* narrated Ahādīth from him.

Statements

1. “Allāh *taʿālā* shall be with the person who fears Him. When Allāh *taʿālā* is with a person, he will have a group which is never overpowered, guards who never fall asleep, and a guide who never takes the wrong path.”

2. “Allāh *taʿālā* shall confer special honour in the Hereafter to the person who obeys him in this world.”

3. “A person learning a chapter of knowledge for the sake of his own rectification and the rectification of others is better than engaging in optional (*nafl*) worship for a full year.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What excellent teachings which ought to be borne in mind.

Demise

He passed away in 117 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Hilyatul Auliyā’*, vol. 2, p. 299)

Hadrat Murrah ibn Shurahbīl *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Murrah, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Ismāʿīl, his father's name is Shurahbīl, and his title is Tayyib.

He was accustomed to worship and obedience, and most regular with *tahajjud*. He abstained from futile talks and inappropriate conversations. He safeguarded his tongue from rumours. Consequently, the pages of history remember him by the title of Tayyib (pure and wholesome). He is a senior Tābiʿī.

ʿAlā' ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm Ayāmī says: "We would go to meet Murrah occasionally, and he would come to visit us as well. We used to see the marks of *sajdah* (prostration) on his forehead, palms, knees and feet. He would sit with us for a short while and then become occupied in his worship and spiritual exercises."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the value he attached to time. He would sit with his visitors for a short while and then occupy himself in worship so that no time is wasted.

Husayn relates: "We went to meet Murrah ibn Shurahbīl. We asked people for his whereabouts, and they said that he is in his small room in

which he has been occupied in worship and spiritual exercises for the last twelve years."

ʿAṯā' ibn Sā'ib relates: "He used to perform 1 000 *rakʿats* of ṣalāh every day. The place where he used to remain seated had become so worn out that it looked as if it was a sitting place for a camel.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his enthusiasm for worship. It is a lesson for us.

Hamzah ʿAbdī relates: "We went to Murrah ibn Shurahbīl so he said: 'When Allāh *taʿālā* decrees any calamity for a person, He carries it out even if he was an obedient and submissive servant. And whatever sustenance He decreed for a person, He conveys it to him even if he is disobedient." (*Ḥilyah al-Auliyā'*, vol. 4, p. 38)

Demise

He passed away in 177 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower his mercy on him. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, p. 525)

Hadrat Khaythamah ibn ʿAbd ar-Rahmān *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Khaythamah, and his father's name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān.

Merits

He is listed among those *ʿulamā'* who used to engage in a lot of worship. He was very generous. He used to participate in jihād very often and used to complete the recitation of the Qur'ān in three days. Aʿmash *rahimahullāh* says: "Khaythamah received 200 000 dirhams as inheritance but he spent the entire amount on the poor, the needy, and the *ʿulamā'* who were occupied in *fiqh* and *fatwā*."

Aʿmash *rahimahullāh* says: "Khaythamah used to cook exotic and expensive meals, and prepare sweetmeats. He would then invite us together with Ibrāhīm Nakhaʿī *rahimahullāh* and say: 'You may all eat, I have no desire for these things. I prepared them for all of you.'"

Misʿar *rahimahullāh* says: "Khaythamah had a basket of *khabīs* (a type of sweetmeat) under his bed. Whenever a group of *qurrā'* (plural of *qāri*) would come to him, or his friends would visit him, he would offer it to them."

ʿAllāmah Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* lists him as a Tābiʿī in his book, *Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his qualities of generosity and giving preference to others over his own self. Also look at how much attention he paid to valuing the *'ulamā'* and hosting them.

His generosity

He was a wealthy and affluent man. He used to have bags upon bags of dirhams. Whenever he saw any of his associates wearing a sheet or *kurtah* which was torn or had a hole in it, he would wait for an opportune moment. When the person would leave through a door, he would leave through another door, go to him, give him some money and tell him to purchase a sheet or *kurtah*, or to use it for some other purpose.

Statements

1. Salamah ibn Kuhayl narrates that Khaythamah *rahimahullāh* met Muhārib ibn Dathār, so he asked him: "How much do you desire death?" Muhārib replied: "I do not desire it at all." He said: "This is a major defect in you."

Note: The fact of the matter is that the pious elders have different inclinations. Someone may desire death, while another may desire long life so that he may be able to do more good deeds. To each his own way.

2. A'mash relates from Khaythamah *rahimahullāh* who said: "Some people were troubling him, but he used to say about them: 'These people are troubling and vexing me. But, by Allāh, when any

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of them comes to me for any need, I fulfil it for him. When any of them causes me harm, I return it with good. Despite this, they still consider me to be more despicable than a black dog.'"

Note: Shaykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* expresses this attitude as follows:

> "It is very easy to return evil with evil. If you are a real man, do good to the one who causes you harm."

If people want to compete in doing good, this is what they must compete in.

3. He said: "Hadrat Sayyidunā Sulaymān *ʿalayhis salām* said: 'We experienced all the good and bad of this world, but the reality is that the least of it is sufficient.'"

Note: This is because if a person puts an end to greed and avarice and suffices with the minimum, his needs can be fulfilled.

4. "If you have to ask for anything which you can receive, ask Allāh *taʿālā* for Paradise. It may well be the day when your *duʿā'* is accepted and you will be fortunate."

5. Hadrat Sufyān *rahimahullāh* says: "Khaythamah *rahimahullāh* made a bequest that he be buried in the graveyard of the poor from his people."

Note: This shows his level of humility.

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Demise

He passed away some time between the years 180 A.H. and 200 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, p. 304)

Hadrat Khalaf ibn Khalīfah *rahimahullāh* – the last Tābiʿī

Name and lineage

His name is Khalaf, his father's name is Khalīfah, his grandfather's name is Sāʿid, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Ahmad.

Residence

He lived in Kūfah, then shifted to Wāsit. He remained there for some time, and then moved to Baghdad where he remained until his demise.

Narration of Hadīth

From among the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he met Hadrat ʿAmr ibn Hurayth *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. But some Muhaddithūn (Hadīth scholars) refute this meeting.

He narrated Ahādīth from his father, from Hadrat Hafs who was the nephew of Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, and from Ismāʿīl ibn Abī Khālid. (*Tahdhīb at-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3, p. 136)

Demise

ʿAllāmah Jalāl ad-Dīn Suyūtī *rahimahullāh* writes that he was the last Tābiʿī to pass away in 180 A.H. (*Tadrīb ar-Rāwī*, vol. 2, p. 214)

ʿAllāmah Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* states that there are two opinions with regard to his year of death,

viz. 171 A.H. or 181 A.H., and he was 101 years old at the time. (*Tahdhīb at-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3, p. 136)

THE TĀBIʿĀT

Rahimahunnallāh

We now relate a brief account of the conditions, and statements of eleven Tābiʿāt, and their academic, practical and moral achievements. Study their beliefs and deeds, read their biographies, and try to emulate them.

The biographies and statements of twenty Sahābiyāt *radiyallāhu ʿanhunna* were given in volume one.

May Allāh *taʿālā* give us the *taufīq* (inspiration) to practise. Āmīn.

Hadrat Fāṯimah bint al-Husayn ibn ʿAlī *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her name is Fāṯimah, her father's name is Hadrat Husayn *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, and her grandfather's name is Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

Family nobility and seniority

She was brought up and trained in an honourable, pure and respected family; and nurtured on a table of knowledge and piety. Her father, Hadrat Husayn ibn ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhumā* was a respected and distinguished leader, and the most beloved grandson of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Hadīth

She is from among the narrators of Hadīth. The following are some of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* from whom she narrated Hadīth: Hadrat Bilāl, Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās, and her respected father, Hadrat Husayn *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

One of the *mursal* narrations has been narrated by her son, ʿAbdullāh ibn Hasan, who said: Hadrat Fāṯimah bint Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* narrates that when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to enter the musjid, he used to say:

بِسْمِ اللهِ، وَالسَّلاَمُ عَلىٰ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ، اَللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَافْتَحْ لِيْ أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

"I enter in the name of Allāh. Peace be on Rasūlullāh. O Allāh! Forgive me, and open for me the doors of Your mercy."

And when he left the musjid, he would say:

بِسْمِ اللهِ، وَالسَّلاَمُ عَلىٰ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ، اَللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ ذُنُوْبِيْ وَافْتَحْ لِيْ أَبْوَابَ فَضْلِكَ

"I leave in the name of Allāh. Peace be on Rasūlullāh. O Allāh! Forgive me my sins, and open for me the doors of Your grace."

Character

Allāh *taʿālā* blessed her with beauty together with excellent character. She loved deeds of goodness and piety, and spent in good causes. The popularity of her excellent character spread very quickly among the people on account of her virtue, nobility, generosity, and goodness.

Statement

She gathered her children on one occasion and said: "A foolish person is never successful, nor does he ever realize his pleasures. It is only a person of courage who is successful. You should therefore seek protection through Allāh's fear."

Note: In other words, fear Allāh *taʿālā* constantly because success lies solely in it, and one can remain safe through it.

Demise

She passed away in 110 A.H. and was buried in Madīnah Munawwarah. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate her grave.[1]

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[1] Maulānā Thanā'ullāh Mahmūd Sāhib: *Daur Tābiʿīn kī Nāmūr Khawātīn*, p. 33 – translation of *Nisā' min ʿAsr at-Tābiʿīn* of Ahmad Khalīl Jumuʿah.

Hadrat ʿUmrah bint ʿAbd ar-Rahmān *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her name is ʿUmrah, her father's name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, and her grandfather's name is Saʿd. She is from the progeny of the Ansār of Madīnah. She was trained and tutored by Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* and she is listed among the women jurists of her time. Her father is one of the Companions of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and her grandfather is from among the early and senior Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Hadīth

She narrated Ahādīth from Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*, Hadrat Umm Salamah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* and other others.

She strove hard in the field of narrating Hadīth. Consequently, she became a senior Hadīth scholar, *ʿālimah*, jurist, a reliable narrator who was used as a proof, and from among the leading Tābiʿāt.

When Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* appointed some scholars for the compilation of Hadīth, he highlighted to them the importance of the Ahādīth of Hadrat ʿUmrah because she enjoyed an unparalleled position among women in the field of Hadīth.

She related Ahādīth from many Sahābiyāt *radiyallāhu ʿanhunna*. In like manner, many senior and erudite scholars related Ahādīth from her. They include: Qādī Abū Bakr ibn Hazm, Imām Zuhrī, ʿUrwah ibn Zubayr, Yahyā ibn Saʿīd and others. Her narrations are found in many Hadīth collections.

Demise

There is difference of opinion with regard to the year of her death. Some say she passed away in 98 A.H. while others say 106 A.H. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 4, p. 507)

Hadrat Hafsah bint Sīrīn *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her name is Hafsah and her father's name is Sīrīn.

Qur'ān

She memorized the Qur'ān when she was twelve years old. She memorized it so well and so perfectly, that whenever her brother Imām Ibn Sīrīn encountered any confusion, he would say: "Go and ask Hafsah."

Worship

She had the following habit for thirty years: When she went on her *musallā* (prayer mat) in the morning, she would not get up from it unless it was for human needs or to get up and sleep in the afternoon. And when she went on her *musallā* for *zuhr*, she would only get up from there the next morning after performing the *ishrāq salāh*. She would then sleep for some time. She used to read half the Qur'ān every night, and would keep fast all the time, except for the two days of 'Īd and the Ayyām-e-Tashrīq (11th, 12th, and 13th of Dhū al-Hijjah).

Hishām ibn Hassān relates: "Hafsah had a *kafan* (shroud) kept ready. When she used to depart for hajj and tie her *ihrām*, she would wear it. Or, when the last ten days of Ramadān commenced, she would wear it and occupy herself in optional worship. (*A'yān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 170)

Merits

The sister of Imām Muhammad ibn Sīrīn is a famous scholar of Hadīth (*muhaddithah*). Senior Hadīth scholars like Ibn Sīrīn and Qatādah narrate Hadīth from her. From the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*, she narrates from Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Umm ʿAtīyyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* and others. Her Ahādīth are found in the *Sihāh Sittah* (the six most authentic collections of Hadīth). Her knowledge and acumen was coupled with piety.

Deep insight into the Qur'ān

She had vast knowledge and deep insight into the Qur'ān. This is displayed from the following incident: ʿĀsim Ahwal and others (who were senior Hadīth scholars) went to listen to Hadīth from her on one occasion. Hafsah *rahimahallāh* covered her face with a sheet despite her very old age. These scholars said to her: "But Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَالْقَوَاعِدُ مِنَ النِّسَآءِ الّتِيْ لاَ يَرْجُوْنَ نِكَاحًا فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ يَّضَعْنَ ثِيَابَهُنَّ غَيْرَ مُتَبَرِّجتٍ بِزِيْنَةٍ

"As for those women who remain seated in the houses having no hope for marriage – there is no sin on them if they keep their [outer] clothes aside without displaying their adornment." (Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 60)

This shows that if very old women do not cover their faces, there is no harm in it. Hafsah asked: "What comes after this verse?" We replied:

وَأَنْ يَّسْتَعْفِفْنَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُنَّ

"But to refrain from this also is better for them."

This shows that it is better for such women to cover their faces.

Hafsah *rahimahallāh* says: "O youngsters! Do whatever you have to do when you are young. I have seen that it is really in one's young age when a person can do work."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What excellent advice for young boys and girls – they ought to adhere to it. Hadrat Murshidī Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say: "Generally, *nisbat* (close affinity and connection) with Allāh *ta'ālā* is acquired when a person is young. One should therefore strive to the utmost during this stage of one's life. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* gave glad tidings of the shade of Allāh's Throne ('Arsh) for those who were engrossed in Allāh's worship from the very beginning [of their lives]. Hadrat Khwājah Muhammad Ma'sūm *rahimahullāh* specifically encouraged the youngsters to acquire spiritual blessings. Similarly, Hadrat Fudayl ibn 'Iyād *rahimahullāh* directed their attention towards rectification and reformation in one of his lectures.

Hafsah *rahimahallāh* purchased a Sindhī slave girl. After a few days, some people asked her: "What do you think of your owner?" The slave girl replied in Persian: "She is a very pious woman, but it seems she committed a very serious major sin because she spends the entire night crying and performing salāh."

Hishām relates that she used to light a lamp at night and occupy herself in optional salāh. Sometimes the lamp would go out, but her house used to remain illuminated until the morning. Her sister, Umm Sulaym, also testifies to seeing the house illuminated without any lamps being lit in it.

Note: Glory to Allāh! This was certainly her miracle. This shows that *karāmāt* are not only performed by men but by women as well. This is the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* which He gives to whomever He wills.

Demise

She passed away in 101 A.H at the age of 91. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on her. (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 179)

Hadrat Umm ad-Dardā' as-Sughrā *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her *kunnīyyat* is Umm ad-Dardā' as-Sughrā, her name is Hajīmah, and her father's name is Hayy. She is the wife of a senior Sahābī, Abū ad-Dardā' 'Uwaymir ibn Zayd *radiyallāhu 'anhu*.

Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* had two wives, and both were known as Umm ad-Dardā'. The elder (Kubrā) of the two is a Sahābiyah while the younger (Sughrā) is a Tābi'īyyah.

Marriage

She was an orphan when she was brought up under the care of Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. He took care of her out of love for Allāh *ta'ālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. He ensured the best for her in the course of her upbringing because he knew that a person who takes care of an orphan is rewarded abundantly by Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* married her when she reached the age of maturity. She adopted the *kunnīyyat* of Abū ad-Dardā' and came to be popularly known as Umm ad-Dardā' as-Sughrā. She began studying under her husband, related many Ahādīth, and became included in the list of Tābi'īyyāt who were *'ālimāt* (female *'ulamā'*), and jurists who left behind lofty and elevated traces in the books of history.

She also learnt contentment and self-reliance. She says: "Abū ad-Dardā' used to come in the morning and ask: 'Is there anything to eat?' If there was nothing to eat, he would say: 'If that is the case, I am fasting.'"

She appreciated and valued these qualities of her husband, and used to make *duʿā'* to Allāh *taʿālā* to join her to him in Paradise.

She used to say: "O Allāh! Abū ad-Dardā' proposed to me and married me. O Allāh! I propose to You and ask You to get me married to Abū ad-Dardā' in the Hereafter."

Obedience and worship

All her time was spent in obedience, acquisition of knowledge and worship. Her house was a refuge for every helpless and poor person. Every type of jurist, *mujtahid*, and worshipper – whether male or female – would come to acquire knowledge of Hadīth from her and engage in Allāh's *dhikr*. Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* relates that people would come to the northern wall of the Jāmiʿ Musjid of Damascus and study jurisprudence from her.

Hadrat ʿAun ibn ʿAbdillāh says: "We used to go to Umm ad-Dardā' and engage in Allāh's *dhikr*. The women would go to her during their times and occupy themselves in *dhikr* and salāh."

Yūnus ibn Maysarah says: "Women would spend entire nights performing salāh with Umm ad-Dardā' until their feet would get cracked."

One of her many good qualities was that she was extremely desirous for assemblies of knowledge, and she used to encourage people to attend the assemblies and discussions of the *'ulamā'*.

She used to say: "Fear in the heart of man is like the flame of a candle. Have you seen it fluttering with fear?" Shahr ibn Haushab replied: "We have certainly seen it."

Demise

Umm ad-Dardā' *rahimahallāh* passed away in 82 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy on her. (*Daur Tābi'īn kī Nāmūr Khawātīn*, p. 289)

Hadrat Sakīnah bint al-Husayn *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her name is Āminah and her *kunnīyyat* is Sakīnah. She is known by her *kunnīyyat*. Her father's name is Husayn, and mother's name is Rabāb bint Imru'ul Qays al-Kalbīyyah. She was from among those Tābiʿīyyāt who memorized the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Ibn ʿAsākir *rahimahullāh* narrates one of her Ahādīth from Fā'id Maulā ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAlī. Fā'id says: Sakīnah bint al-Husayn narrated to me from her mother who said that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "The bearers of the Qur'ān will be the *ʿārifīn* (those who have truly recognized Allāh *taʿālā*) of Paradise."

Character

She possessed noble character. She was embellished with the qualities of good etiquette, modesty, knowledge, intelligence, acumen, farsightedness, and outward and inner beauty. Together with her high status, she was extremely generous. She attached no value whatsoever to riches and wealth. Anyone who went to her would receive a lot of wealth, and she would honour the person. All these qualities made her extremely famous.

Demise

She passed away on 5 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 117 A.H. in Madīnah Munawwarah on a Thursday. She was 80 years old at the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on her.

Hadrat Umm Kulthūm bint Hadrat ʿAlī *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her name is Umm Kulthūm, and her father's name is Hadrat ʿAlī ibn Abī Tālib ibn ʿAbd al-Muttalib al-Hāshimī. She was the blood sister of Hadrat Hasan and Husayn *radiyallāhu ʿanhumā* and she was born in 6 A.H. during the era of her maternal grandfather, Hadrat Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, who named her Umm Kulthūm. She certainly saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* but did not narrate from him.

Upbringing

She was brought up in a home which Allāh *taʿālā* had purified of all evil. Allāh *taʿālā* blessed her with an excellent mother, viz. Sayyidah Fātimah bint Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* who is the leader of all the women of Paradise.

As she grew up, she emerged as one of the most eloquent daughters of the Quraysh.

Marriage

She got married to Amīr al-Mu'minīn Sayyidunā Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* who was overjoyed at having established a family tie with the household of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. [When he got married to her], he said to the early emigrants – Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu*

ʿanhu, Hadrat Talhah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Hadrat ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn ʿAuf *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and others – to congratulate him. They asked: "For what?" He replied: "I have the honour of marrying the daughter of Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*." He then related a Hadīth in which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "All lineages and bonds will be severed on the day of Resurrection except for my lineage and bond."

Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* then said: "I am a Sahābī of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and this bond [of marriage with Hadrat Umm Kulthūm] has added to the honour of being his Sahābī."

Imām Dhahabī, Ibn Kathīr and ʿAllāmah Tabarī *rahimahumullāh* state that her marriage took place in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 17 A.H. and Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* gave 40 000 coins of the currency at the time as dowry (*mahr*).

When Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to fulfil the needs of the Muslims, his wife, Umm Kulthūm, would not lag behind. She used to assist Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and help him to remove the pains of the people. And how could she not have done this, after all, she was from the progeny of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the wife of the second caliph, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. She used to remain at the forefront in every good work so that she may receive as much reward as possible.

Demise

According to Imām Dhahabī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat ʿUmm Kulthūm *rahimahallāh* passed away during the era of Sayyidunā Amīr Muʿāwiyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on her.

Some books state that the *janāzah salāh* was led by the governor of Madīnah, Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀs, and her *janāzah* was attended by Hadrat ʿAbbās, Hadrat Abū Hurayrah, Hadrat Abū Saʿīd Khudrī and Hadrat Abū Qatādah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. (*Daur Tābiʿīn kī Nāmūr Khawātīn*, p. 129)

Hadrat Mu'ādhah bint 'Abdillāh al-'Adawīyyah *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her name is Mu'ādhah al-'Adawīyyah, her *kunnīyyat* is Umm as-Sahbā', and her father's name is 'Abdullāh.

Merits

She was a distinguished and eminent Tābi'īyyah. She quenched her thirst for knowledge in the company of the Sahābah and Sahābiyāt. She studied mostly under Hadrat 'Ā'ishah *radiyallāhu 'anhā*, Hadrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and Hishām ibn 'Āmir *radiyallāhu 'anhu*; and also narrated Ahādīth from them.

Worship

She held a lofty position in piety, deep understanding of *Dīn*, and other acts of worship. Words of wisdom would flow from her tongue, and these would have an effect on the people. She used to wear thin garments in winter so that she would experience the cold which would drive away sleep, and not allow her to develop laziness while in worship. (*Daur Tābi'īn kī Nāmūr Khawātīn*, p. 232)

Salāh

If she was occupied in any work at the time of salāh, she would stop her work immediately and perform her salāh. She used to spend the entire

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night in salāh, *dhikr* and recitation of the Qur'ān. She used to perform 600 *rakʿats* of salāh daily.

Remembrance of death

When the sun used to rise, she would say: "This is the day of my death." Then she would not sleep until the night. When night approached, she would say: "This is the night of my death." And she would not sleep until the morning. When she was overcome by sleep, she would stand up and walk around in her house. She used to say: "O my soul! Eternal sleep is before us [i.e. when we die]." She would spend the entire night in this way and feared death overtaking her while she was asleep. (*Tabaqāt*)

Note: We learn from this that not only men, but even women were honoured with abundant worship. May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow a similar desire in our women.

Statements

1. "I am astonished at the eyes which sleep when they know that the night is very long in the darkness of the grave."

2. She said to a woman whom she had breast-fed: "O my daughter! Become a woman who fears and is hopeful of meeting Allāh *taʿālā*. I consider a person who has hope to be the nearest to Allāh *taʿālā*. And the one who fears Him should hope for His sanctuary at the time when he/she stands before Him."

3. She used to say with regard to having less desire for this world: “I lived for 70 years in this world but found no coolness for my eyes in it.” In other words, I did not find any peace and comfort in it. From the time her husband passed away to the end of her life, she never lied down on her bed.

Demise

She passed away in 83 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on her. (*Daur Tābiʿīn kī Nāmūr Khawātīn*, p. 235)

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah bint Saʿd *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her name is ʿĀ'ishah and her father's name is Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. She was a resident of Madīnah.

She was a renowned Tābiʿīyyah, a woman of knowledge and virtue; and a distinguished memorizer and narrator [of Hadīth].

Educational upbringing

She was born in Madīnah during the caliphate of Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. In those days, Madīnah Munawwarah was the centre of Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*, *ʿulamā'* and *muhaddithīn*. She was nurtured before her father's eyes during this blessed era. Her father is one of the ʿAsharah Mubash-sharah (the ten Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* who received glad tidings of Paradise in this world). Can there be a greater honour than this?

Hadīth

She narrated Ahādīth from her father and some of the Pure Wives of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Many Tābiʿīn narrated Ahādīth from her, e.g. Imām Mālik ibn Anas *rahimahullāh*, Abū Ayyūb Sakhtiyānī *rahimahullāh*, al-Hakam ibn Utaybah, Abū az-Zinād, Muhājir ibn Mismār *rahimahumullāh*. Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* accepted her Ahādīth.

Worship

Together with narrating Hadīth and possessing deep understanding of *Dīn*, she enjoyed a special position as regards her worship. She was extremely particular about salāh. She had virtually handed herself over for salāh in Musjid-e-Nabawī. She used to pay particular attention to optional salāh and other acts of worship. She imbibed this special interest in worship from the Pure Wives of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* because she used to spend a lot of time in their service.

Note: Glory to Allāh! By virtue of remaining in the company of Hadrat Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and the Pure Wives of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* she reached this lofty position wherein an erudite imām like Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* narrated Ahādīth from her. She also reached a high level in worship. We learn from this that these positions are not reserved for men. Women who turned their attention in this direction were able to reach these positions. Even today, if the women of Islam direct themselves towards this, they can achieve success. There is no shortage in the treasures of Allāh *taʿālā*. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

She passed away in 117 A.H. at the age of 90. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on her.

Hadrat Umm Kulthūm bint Abī Bakr *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her name is Umm Kulthūm and her father's name is Hadrat Abū Bakr Siddīq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. She is the wife of Hadrat Sayyidunā Talhah ibn ʿUbaydillāh *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* who was from the ʿAsharah Mubash-sharah.

Education and training

Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to his daughter, Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*: "It is your responsibility to educate and train Umm Kulthūm." Consequently, she carried out her father's order and did her best to train her. She would safeguard her against anything which would lead to disobedience. Hadrat Umm Kulthūm *rahimahallāh* acquired her entire Hadīth education from Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*. She then qualified under her in such a manner that she was included among those Tābiʿīyyāt whose knowledge and merits people had confidence in.

Hadrat Jābir ibn ʿAbdillāh *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* who is a Sahābī, also narrated Hadīth from her. Many Tābiʿīn narrated from her as well. Her narrations are found in *Tirmidhī Sharīf* and *Muslim Sharīf*.

Marriage

She was married to Hadrat Talhah ibn ʿUbaydillāh *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. She spent her life with her husband as a very trustworthy worshipper [of Allāh *taʿālā*], and became famous for it.

Generosity

Umm Kulthūm *rahimahallāh* inherited the quality of generosity from her father, Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, whose generosity was unparalleled. Moreover, she was trained by Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* who herself was well-known for her big-heartedness. In addition to this, she was the wife of Hadrat Talhah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* whom Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had given the titles:

طلحة الخير، طلحة الفياض، طلحة الجود

"Talhah, the one who brings good. Talhah, the big-hearted. Talhah, the generous."

Umm Kulthūm *rahimahallāh* was trained in a pure environment like this, and so, she used to encourage others to do the same, and she herself participated fully in it.

Note: *Māshā Allāh*! Generosity and big-heartedness are worthy of emulation for everyone – men and women. In fact, women should pay particular attention to it so that they may acquire

the good of both worlds. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

There is no clear mention of when Umm Kulthūm *rahimahallāh* passed away. However, there are certain indications that she passed away after 58 A.H. in Madīnah Munawwarah. (*Daur Tābiʿīn kī Nāmūr Khawātīn*, p. 209)

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah bint Talhah *rahimahallāh*

Name and lineage

Her name is ʿĀ'ishah, and her father's name is Sayyidunā Talhah ibn ʿUbaydillāh *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* who is from the ʿAsharah Mubash-sharah. Her mother is Umm Kulthūm bint Abī Bakr Siddīq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Hadrat Umm al-Mu'minīn ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* is her maternal aunt.

Merits

She is a senior Tābiʿīyyah who is a pious woman from a great family of the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. She was brought up and trained by Umm al-Mu'minīn Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*. She acquired knowledge, etiquette, jurisprudence, Hadīth and other sciences from her. She was completely different from other women in her outlook. She was totally aloof from self-adornment and beautification. She used to remain fully engrossed in acquiring knowledge and facts.

Hadīth

She narrated Ahādīth from Umm al-Mu'minīn Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*. Her Ahādīth are mentioned in the *Sihāh* (the six most authentic collections of Hadīth). She acquired the knowledge of Hadīth and an affinity for it from

her aunt. Consequently, she was one of those Tābiʿīyyāt from whom people quoted Ahādīth.

Many senior Tābiʿīn and *ʿulamā'* narrate Hadīth from her. From among her narrations, one of them is the one quoted by Imām Abū Dā'ūd *rahimahullāh*, whose chain of transmitters reads as follows:

عن عائشة بنت طلحة عن أم المؤمنين عائشة رضي الله تعالى عنها

"On the authority of ʿĀ'ishah bint Talhah from Umm al-Mu'minīn ʿĀ'ishah radiyallāhu ʿanhā..."

She says: "I did not see anyone who resembled Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in his appearance, ways and conditions more than Fātimah bint Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. When she used to go to him, he would stand up, kiss her, and seat her in his place. When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to go to her house, she would stand up, kiss him, and seat him in her place."

A similar narration with the same chain of transmitters is narrated by Imām Muslim *rahimahullāh*. She says: "Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* addressed the Mothers of the Believers [his pure wives] saying: 'The first one to join me will be the one who has the longest hand.'"

Character and habits

Hadrat ʿĀʾishah bint Talhah *rahimahallāh* used to engage in the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* abundantly. Her tongue was never empty of Allāh's remembrance by night and day. Her *nafs* had been purified and became pure. This made her unique among the daughters of Hadrat Talhah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. She was a woman who feared Allāh *taʿālā* and submitted before Him. Speaking the truth was her salient feature. She was matchless in her knowledge and cognition (*maʿrifat*).

Demise

She passed away in 101 A.H. (*Daur Tābiʿīn kī Nāmūr Khawātīn*, p. 15)

Hadrat Sayyidah Rābiʿah al-ʿAdawīyyah al-Basrīyyah *rahimahallāh*

Introduction

She was a resident of Basra. Her seniority can be gauged from the fact that Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh* used to ask her *masā'il*, ask her for advice, and request her to make *duʿā'* for him.

Crying before Allāh *taʿālā*

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĪsā says: "When I went into the house of Hadrat Rābiʿah al-ʿAdawīyyah, I saw special effulgence on her face, and she was a woman who used to cry profusely [to Allāh *taʿālā*]."

A person read a certain verse of the Qur'ān which makes mention of the Hell-fire in her presence. On hearing this verse, she screamed and fell down. (*Sifatus Safwah* of Ibn al-Jauzī, vol. 4, p. 27)

Fear

Her crying was accompanied with sorrow. When the Hell-fire was mentioned in her presence, she would fall unconscious for lengthy periods of time. She used to say: "Our *istighfār* (seeking forgiveness) is in itself in need of *istighfār*." She would not accept gifts. She would say: "I have no need for this world." Her *kafan* (shroud) used to be placed at her place of *sajdah* (prostration), and this place used to remain moist with her tears.

Note: O woman of today! She is a woman just like you. She acquired excellence in knowledge and deeds, on account of which, many senior scholars used to benefit from her. Unfortunately, the situation today is that let alone our women succumbing to futile and useless greed, they influence their husbands. Apart from self-beautification and luxuries and comforts, they have no desire for excellence and beauty in knowledge and good deeds. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us. Āmīn.

One day she heard Hadrat Sufyān *rahimahullāh* saying:

واحزناه

"O how sorrowful!"

She replied:

واقلة حزناه

"O how little your sorrow is!"

What she meant was that if you were really sorrowful and concerned, you would never have engrossed yourself with the comforts and luxuries of this world.

There are many other well-known stories displaying her merits. (*Tabaqāt*)

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Statements

1. "There is a fruit [result] for everything. The fruit of *maʿrifat* (true recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*) is that a person directs himself totally towards Allāh *taʿālā*."

2. She used to say:

استغفر الله من قلة الصدق في استغفر الله

"I seek forgiveness from Allāh taʿālā for the lack of sincerity in my seeking forgiveness from Allāh taʿālā."

3. Hadrat Sufyān *rahimahullāh* asked her: "What is the best thing through which a servant can seek closeness to Allāh *taʿālā*?" She replied: "The best way of acquiring closeness to Allāh *taʿālā* is for a person not to have any friend in this world and the Hereafter apart from Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent piece of advice which every *sālik* (the one treading the path) must essentially bear in mind. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

She passed away in 185 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on her. (*Qāmūs al-Mashāhīr*, vol. 1, p. 234)

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

خير الناس قرني ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم (بخاري، فضائل أصحاب النبي)

THE TABAʿ TĀBIʿĪN
Rahimahumullāh

The *ʿulamā'* of the *ummah* consider the third part of the above Hadīth to refer to the distinguished group of the Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn. They are the ones who acquired the blessings of the Tābiʿīn, and rendered extraordinary services in the protection, spread and proliferation of Islamic sciences. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them with the best of rewards.

Hadrat Sayyidunā Imām Mālik ibn Anas *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Mālik, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and his title is Imām Dār al-Hijrah. His father's name is Anas. He was born in 93 A.H.

Merits

He acquired knowledge from 900 scholars, 300 of whom were Tābiʿīn. He is well-known by the title Imām Dār al-Hijrah (the imām of Madīnah). He is a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī of great knowledge and virtue.

Before sitting to explain the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he would first take a bath, smoke himself [with fragrant sticks like *ʿūd*), apply perfume, and prohibit the people from raising their voices.

Respect for Hadīth

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh* narrates: "Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* commenced delivering his Hadīth lesson one day and in the course of the lesson, his facial expression changed several times. But he neither stopped the lesson nor was there any sloppiness in the lesson. When he completed the lesson, I went to him and asked him if he was okay. He replied: 'In the course of the lesson, a scorpion bit me about ten times.' He added: 'I did not do this to show off my patience, bravery and fortitude. Rather, I did

it solely out of respect for the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*'"

Note: Patience and forbearance of such a level out of respect for Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* Hadīth is a clear *karāmat* of Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*. Allāh *taʿālā* will certainly reward him greatly for it.

Love for Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam

Yāfiʿī writes in his *Tārīkh* that Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* had intense love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to the extent that even in his old age and weak condition, he would not ride on an animal in Madīnah. He used to say: "I certainly do not have the courage to ride an animal in the city in which Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* blessed body is buried." (*Siyar Sahābah, Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 8, p. 493)

Note: So much love and respect for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* can only come through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*. May Allāh *taʿālā* also bless us with true love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*

Fear for the Hereafter

Qaʿnabī relates: "I went to visit him when he was on his death-bed. I sat down after offering *salām* to him. I looked at him and saw him crying. I asked him the reason for crying, and he replied: 'Why should I not cry? Is there anyone more

deserving to cry than me? It is my wish to receive one lash for each ruling (*mas'alah*) which I gave from my own opinion. If only I did not give a single ruling from my own opinion. I could have remained silent on the answers which were given before me [and not voiced my opinion on them].'"

Note: Glory to Allāh! This was true fear of the Hereafter and importance to the task of issuing *fatāwā*. There is excessive recklessness in this regard in our times.

In his book, *Muhaddithīn-e-'Izām*, Hadrat Maulānā Taqīy ad-Dīn Sāhib Nadwī Mazāhirī writes the following about Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*:

Acknowledgement of his merits

Someone asked Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh*: "If someone desires to learn Hadīth verbally, whose Ahādīth should he memorize?" He replied: "The Hadīth of Imām Mālik."

Character and mannerisms

Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* used to respect Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* profusely. When he used to mention the name of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the colour of his face would change. When asked about this, he would reply: "The condition of the pure souls whom we met was far more greater than mine."

Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* had extreme love for Madīnah. Apart from going on a journey, he would never leave the precincts of Madīnah.

The house in which Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* lived in Madīnah had belonged to ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He took this house on rent and lived there all the time. He did not build [or purchase] his own house. In the Musjid-e-Nabawī, he would sit at exactly the same spot where ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to sit. And this was the exact spot where Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* bed used to be laid out when he used to remain in *iʿtikāf* (seclusion in the musjid).

Pardoning and overlooking

Muhammad Dhū an-Nafs az-Zakīyyah in Madīnah and his brother, Ibrāhīm, in Basra began rebelling against the caliph Mansūr when the latter began imposing excesses on the *sayyids* (the descendents of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*). Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* supported these two. Consequently, the governor of Madīnah, Jaʿfar ibn Sulaymān, lashed Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* with 70 lashes on his back. His entire back was covered in blood. Both his hands were dislocated from his shoulders. He was made to sit on a camel and paraded around the entire city in order to humiliate him.

It was probably in 146 A.H. when Mansūr came to Madīnah. He wanted to take retribution from

the governor of Madīnah [for having lashed Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*]. However, Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* stopped him and said: "When the lashes were striking me, I thought of Jaʿfar's relationship to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and I therefore continued forgiving him." (*Muhaddithīn-e-ʿIzām*, p. 66)

Imām Mālik's *rahimahullāh* clothes

Zubayrī relates: "Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* used to wear the exquisite garments of Aden, Khurāsān and Egypt, and apply perfume. He used to say: "When Allāh *taʿālā* blesses a person with bounties, their effects must be obvious." He used to say: "Students must wear white clothes."

Note: Students should most certainly wear white clothes.

Bishr *rahimahullāh* relates: "I went to visit Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*. He was wearing a sheet of the royalty which cost 500 dīnārs."

An ascetic wrote a letter to Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* saying: "You wear very fine and expensive clothes, you eat exotic foods, you sit on expensive carpets, and you have a guard at your door."

Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* wrote the following reply:

"Your admonitory and affectionate letter made a great impact on me. You wrote that I wear fine

and expensive clothes. When I were such clothes, I seek forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā*. And I wear them because Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِيْنَةَ اللهِ الَّتِيْ أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبٰتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ ؕ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَّوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ.

"Say: Who has forbidden the beauty of Allāh which He created for His servants, and the good things of food? Say: These bounties are originally for the believers in this world, exclusively for them on the day of Resurrection." (Sūrah al-Aʿrāf, 7: 32)

I am fully aware of the fact that it is better to abstain from using such things. (*Imām Mālik aur unkī kitāb Muwattā kā Maqām*, p. 97)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the excellent decision which he made! He considered it permissible to wear exquisite and expensive clothes, but considered it better not to wear it because it was against the general Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Statements

1. "I have heard that the *ʿulamāʾ* will be questioned about the same things which the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* will be questioned."

2. "Hypocrites in a musjid are similar to birds in a cage. The moment the cage is opened, the birds fly out."

Note: In the same way, the hypocrites – because of their weak faith - do not experience peace and tranquillity in the musjid.

3. "When a person praises his self, the effulgence of his face disappears."

4. "Knowledge does not entail excessive narrations. Rather, it is an effulgence (*nūr*) which Allāh *taʿālā* places in a person's heart.

5. "The qualities of deference, peacefulness and submission are essential for a student."

6. "It is not appropriate for an *ʿālim* to discuss matters of knowledge to a person who does not follow it because this entails degradation and humiliation of knowledge."

7. He used to walk barefoot in the alleys of Madīnah. He used to say: "I feel ashamed that the hooves of my animal should trample on such a sanctified land in which the grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is."

8. Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* asked Hadrat Mitraf: "What do people think of me?" He replied: "Your friends speak highly about you but your enemies speak ill of you." He said: "People have always been like that. Some will be your friends and others will be your enemies. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from everyone having the same thoughts about me."

Note: In other words, every single person speaks in praise of me, or every single person speaks ill of me. This is dangerous. ʿAllāmah Shāmī *rahimahullāh* writes:

لا يسود سيد بدون ودود يمدح وحسود يقدح

"A person cannot become a leader without having friends who praise him and envious people who criticize him."

The heart is consoled and strengthened by praise. And the mind is put in balance by criticism and denigration. In this way, a person does not become conceited by any of his achievements and merits.

Demise

He passed away in 179 A.H. and was buried in Baqīʿ (the graveyard of Madīnah Munawwarah). May Allāh *taʿālā* shower him with His mercy. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 45)

Hadrat Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage and original residence

His name is Rabīʿ and his father's name was Sabīh. His *kunnīyyat* was Abū Bakr and Abū Hafs. But he is more well-known as Abū Hafs. He was a freed slave of the Banū Saʿd ibn Zayd tribe. This is why he is also attributed to them and referred to as Saʿdī. Nothing more is known about his lineage. His original residence was Basra.

Teachers

He was a special student of Hadrat Imām Hasan Basrī *rahimahullāh*. He also studied under other *shuyūkh*. His long list of teachers includes the names of senior Tābiʿīn such as Ibn Sīrīn, Mujāhid ibn Jubayr, ʿAtā' ibn Abī Rabāh and others *rahimahumullāh*.

Students

The students who were irrigated from the fountain of Ibn Rabīʿs knowledge include the following: ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak, Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāh, Sufyān Thaurī and others *rahimahumullāh*.

Merits

Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh *rahimahullāh* occupied a distinguished position among the Taba' Tābiʿīn. ʿAllāmah Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh* and other scholars refer to him as a Muhaddith Tābiʿī. This confusion probably arose because of

his intellectual acumen and lofty position. The fact of the matter is that his meeting a Sahābī is not established.

Almost all the imāms and scholars acknowledge his knowledge, virtue, merits and capabilities. Imām Abū Zurʿah *rahimahullāh* says about him:

شيخ صالح صدوق

"He was a righteous and honest shaykh."

Imām Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh* writes:

ربيع سيد من سادات المسلمين

"Rabīʿ was one of the leaders of the Muslims."

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* writes:

كان عابدا مجاهدا

"He was an ardent worshipper and a mujāhid." (Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn, vol. 2, p. 163)

Worship and spiritual exercises

Ibn Hibbān *rahimahullāh* refers to his worship, spiritual exercises and remaining awake at night as follows:

كان من عباد أهل البصرة وزهادهم، وكان يشبه بيته ببيت النحل من كثرة التهجد.

"He was from among the ardent worshippers and ascetics of Basra. His house appeared like a bee-hive because of excessive tahajjud."

Rabīʿ speaks about his shaykh's, Hadrat Hasan Basrī's, humility, submission and selflessness as follows:

كان الحسن إذا أثنى عليه أحد في وجهه كره ذلك، وإذا دعا له سر بذلك.

"If anyone praised Imām Hasan directly in his face, he disliked it. But if anyone made duʿā' for him, he was very pleased by it."

Hadrat Rabīʿ takes part in the battle of Bārbud (Gujarat)

The great historian, Imām Tabarī *rahimahullāh* provides details about this battle under the incidents which took place in 160 A.H. He writes as follows:

ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Shihāb, Masmuʿī, Matūʿah and others reached Bārbud with their armies and the battle started two days later. Allāh *taʿālā* gave a powerful victory to the Muslims. The cavalry of the Muslim army spread throughout the city and the enemies were forced to seek refuge in their temples. They were eventually defeated and killed. About twenty or more Muslims were martyred. In this way, Allāh *taʿālā* gave control over the city to the Muslims. However, after the battle, there was a storm at sea and the Muslim army could not go back immediately. They had to wait for the weather to become conducive once again, and for

the storm to subside. In the course of this wait, a plague known as *"hamām qar"* spread among the *mujāhidīn*. This plague manifested itself as sores and scabies in the mouth. Almost 1 000 people passed away because of this plague. Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh *rahimahullāh* was from among those who passed away.

When the conditions became conducive for travel, the Muslim army departed and reached the shores of Persia at a place known as the Hamrān Sea. A severe wind blew at night and broke all the ships. Some people drowned while others survived. The survivors presented the prisoners of war to the governor of Basra, Muhammad ibn Sulaymān. The daughter of the Rajah of Bārbud was among them.

The name Bārbud is actually the Arabicised form of the word Bhārbhūt which is an old historical city in the Gujarat district of Bharūch. A Rajah was ruling this place under the authority of the Maharajah Balahrā. This place had a massive temple. Even till today, it has a religious fair every twelve years.

The burial place of Imām Rabīʿ

From the above details on the battle of Bārbud, it becomes clear that this battle took place in a city of India known as Bārbud, which in those days was under the control of a Rajah. Furthermore, we learn that Imām Rabīʿ *rahimahullāh* together with 1 000 *mujāhidīn* passed away due to a

plague in this place or somewhere near it. Their burial arrangements were made at the place where they passed away.

We learn from the records of historians and biographers that Imām Rabīʿ *rahimahullāh* passed away and was buried either in Bārbud or on an island between this place and the ocean. Even till today, it is generally well known among the Muslims of Gujarat that there is a grave of a Tābiʿī in Bhārbhūt, district Bharūch, and Rānder, district Sūrat. In fact, a specific grave in Rānder is said to be of a Tābiʿī. But this is not verified. It is obvious that Hadrat Rabīʿ *rahimahullāh* and a thousand other *mujāhidīn* of Islam are buried in these two places or somewhere near them. It is most likely that this sanctified place is in Bhārbhūt or somewhere near it.

A few narrations of Imām Rabīʿ

We will now quote a few narrations and Ahādīth of Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh Basrī *rahimahullāh* as a source of blessings. The *Sunan at-Tirmidhī* under the chapter, *Abwāb at-Tafsir ʿan Rasūlillāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* contains the following narration with regard to Sūrah Āl ʿImrān:

حدثنا أبو كريب نا وكيع عن ربيع – وهو ابن صبيح – وحماد بن سلمة عن أبي غالب قال رأى أبو أمامة رؤسا منصوبة على درج دمشق، فقال أبو أمامة: كلاب النار شر قتلى تحت أديم السماء، خير قتلى من قتلوه، ثم قرأ يوم تبيض وجوه وتسود وجوه إلى اخرالاية، قلت لأبي أمامة، أنت سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه

وسلم قال: لو لم أسمعه إلا مرة أو مرتين أو ثلاثا أو أربعا حتى عد سبعا ما حدثتكموه. هذا حديث حسن.

Imām Tirmidhī says: Abū Kurayb narrated to us from Wakīʿ who narrated from Rabīʿ - and he is Ibn Sabīh – and Hammād ibn Salamah from Abū Ghālib who said: Abū Umāmah saw some heads of the Khawārij on the steps to the entrance of Damascus. So Abū Umāmah radiyallāhu ʿanhu said: These are the dogs of Hell. They are the worst under the skies who have been killed. And the one who killed them (i.e. Hadrat ʿAlī radiyallāhu ʿanhu) is the best who has been killed. He then read this verse: "The day when faces will be white and other faces will be black....until the end of the verse. [On hearing this], I asked Abū Umāmah: "Did you hear Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam saying this about them?" He replied: "Had I not heard it from him one, two, three, four…he counted until seven times, I would not have related it to you." [Imām Tirmidhī rahimahullāh says]: This is a sound Hadīth.

The above narration is also quoted by Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh* in his *Musnad* and Ibn Mājah *rahimahullāh* in his *Sunan*. But there are some differences in the words of these two narrations.

The illustrious student of Imām Rabīʿ *rahimahullāh*, Imām Muhammad ibn Shaybānī *rahimahullāh*, also quoted the Ahādīth and narrations of his teacher in his books. We now narrate a few Ahādīth from his book, *al-Hujjah ʿalā Ahl al-Madīnah*. Imām Muhammad

rahimahullāh says in *Bāb al-Khata' wa an-Nisyān wa as-Sahw*:

أخبرنا ربيع بن صبيح البصري عن الحسن بن أبي الحسن البصري أنه قال في رجل تناول في صلوته كوز من ماء فشرب منه ناسيا أنه يعيد الصلوة.

Rabī' ibn Sabīh al-Basrī informed us on the authority of al-Hasan ibn Abī al-Hasan al-Basrī who said: The person who takes a glass of water and drinks from it forgetfully while he is in salāh must repeat his salāh.

He says in *Bāb Ghusl al-Jumu'ah*:

أخبرنا ربيع بن صبيح البصري عن يزيد الرقاشي عن أنس بن مالك وعن الحسن البصري رضي الله عنهما كلاهما يرفعه إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال من توضأ يوم الجمعة فبها ونعمت ومن اغتسل فالغسل أفضل.

Rabī' ibn Sabīh al-Basrī informed us on the authority of Yazīd ar-Riqāshī from Anas ibn Mālik radiyallāhu 'anhu, and Rabī' also narrated on the authority of al-Hasan al-Basrī, and Yazīd and al-Hasan both narrate it marfū'an[1] from Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam who said: When a person performs wudū' on a Friday, it is very good act. And the person who performs ghusl (takes a bath), then ghusl is better.

He says in *Bāb ar-Rajul yansā siyāma thalāthata ayyāmin fil hajj*:

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[1] A Hadīth who chain of narrators starts with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.*

أخبرنا ربيع بن صبيح عن يزيد الرقاشي عن أنس بن مالك رضي الله تعالى عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم نهى عن صوم خمسة أيام، يوم الفطر ويوم النحر وأيام التشريق.

Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh informed us on the authority of Yazīd ar-Riqāshī from Anas ibn Mālik radiyallāhu ʿanhu that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam prohibited fasting on five days: ʿīd al-fitr, ʿīd al-ad-hā, and ayyām at-tashrīq (11th, 12th and 13th of Dhū al-Hijjah).

He says in *Bāb ar-Rajul ya'kulu wa yashrabu nāsiyan*:

أخبرنا ربيع بن صبيح قال حدثنا الحسن البصري قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: إذا أكل أحدكم أو شرب ناسيا وهو صائم في شهر رمضان أو غير رمضان فإن الله أطعمه وسقاه فليمض في صومه.

Ar-Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh informed us saying: al-Hasan al-Basrī related to us that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: If any one you eats or drinks forgetfully while he is fasting in the month of Ramadān or in any other month, then it is Allāh taʿālā who gave him food and drink. He should continue with his fast [i.e. his fast is not broken]."

Imām Khatīb Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* writes in *al-Kifāyah fī ʿilm ar-Riwāyah*:

يحيى بن بكير: ثنا الربيع بن صبيح عن الحسن قال كان يقول: ليس لأهل البدعة غيبة.

Yahyā ibn Bukayr relates: ar-Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh narrated to us on the authority of al-Hasan [al-Basrī] that he used to say: "Speaking of the evils of the ahl al-bidʿah (those who innovate in Dīn) is not considered to be ghībah (backbiting)."

In other words, when it comes to Hadīth, speaking about the faults of the *ahl al-bidʿah* and others who follow their whims and fancies is not *ghībah*. In fact, it is a means of safeguarding and protecting Hadīth. (Qādī At-har Sāhib Mubārakpūrī: *Islāmī Hind kī ʿAzmat Raftah*, p. 144)

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* reward Qādī At-har Sāhib Mubārakpūrī *rahimahullāh* for not only quoting the statements of Hadrat Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh *rahimahullāh* but his narrations as well. In this way, he gave us an opportunity to read the lofty teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. May Allāh *taʿālā* imbibe us with its blessings. Āmīn.

Maulānā Sayyid ʿAbd al-Hayy Sāhib *rahimahullāh* provides a few facts in the beginning of his book, *Yād-e-Ayyām*, i.e. a short history of Gujarat, under the chapter: *The beginning of Islamic ties with Gujarat*. We are quoting the beginning section of this chapter for the benefit of the reader. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā*.

The beginning of Islamic ties with Gujarat

It is popularly believed that the message of Islam in India first spread from Sindh. In 93 A.H.

Muhammad ibn Qāsim Thaqafī *rahimahullāh* crossed the desert of Sindh which was very similar to the land of Arabia, and his birth place, Marzbūm, and established an Islamic state there. It extended from Rājpūtānah from one side and the valley of Kashmir on the other side. This sultanate remained under Muslim control for about 120 years.

At the same time, we cannot deny the fact that he first set his sights on the green and lush mountains of Gujarat. He continued setting his sights on it until he took control of Gujarat and wielded his authority over it.

The first Muslim attack

In 15 A.H. (i.e. just five years after Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* departure from this world), Hadrat ʿUmar Fārūq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* appointed ʿUthmān ibn al-ʿĀs Thaqafī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* as the governor of Bahrain and ʿUmmān. The moment he took control of this region, he appointed his brother, Hakam ibn al-ʿĀs *radiyallāhu ʿanhu,* over Bahrain, and ordered him to advance towards India. Hakam undertook the difficult sea journey on ships, and he together with his army landed on the shores of Gujarat. Or we could say: Gujarat was the first region of India to have the honour of having people who believe in one Allāh, believe He has no partner, and who consider Him to be Omni-potent and the Absolute Controller of all affairs. The valleys and mountains of this region were the first in India

where the calls of *Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is the greatest) echoed.

The fortunate ones who gained martyrdom in this conquest most probably included those pure souls who had the good fortune of seeing the beautiful countenance of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and benefited from his pure companionship and spiritual training. The sanctified countenances of these martyrs of Islam were peacefully buried in the loving embrace of this land. Although we do not know where this "treasure" is buried, it is certainly buried somewhere in Mumbai, Bharūch and surrounding areas.

In those days, there was no sign whatsoever of Mumbai. All the crowds of people whom you see moving about today, and the numerous markets which you see were all covered by forests and thickets. But near it, there was a place known as Thānah (which the Arabic books refer to as Tānah, and which is presently the main town of the district of Thānah). It was a splendorous and inhabited harbour. And this is where the first Muslim conquest took place.[1]

The second conquest

The second conquest was led by Hakam ibn al-ʿĀs *rahimahullāh* on Bharūch, which in the Arabic books is referred to as Barūj or Barūs. People

[1] Balādhurī: *Futūh al-Buldān*.

here used to trade in sapphires and lac (a resin). This made it the most flourishing and populated sea-port of India.[1]

Hakam was quite successful in both these conquests but because Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was against sea journeys, Muslims did not pay much attention in this regard. (*Futūh al-Buldān*)

Third conquest

Sindh came under the control of Muslims in 93 A.H. Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, the caliph in Damascus, handed over the governorship of Sindh to Junayd ibn ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Murrī in 107 A.H. Junayd had his own ideas. He made arrangements for his area to be run by someone else and proceeded towards Gujarat. He sent some Arab armies towards Kuch of this own accord. Kuch is referred to as Qussah in Arabic books. These armies ravaged Bharūch, went to Mālwah, and conquered area after area. The enemies were subdued everywhere and much booty was acquired. (*Futūh al-Buldān*)

The fourth conquest and the first Muslim writer

After some time, al-Mahdī Billāh al-ʿAbbāsi, the caliph in Baghdad, despatched ʿAbd al-Malik ibn ash-Shihāb al-Masmuʿī in 159 A.H. with a considerable amount of goods for the sake of

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[1] Hamawī: *Muʿjam al-Buldān.*

jihād. There were some volunteers in this army, and one of them was Abū Bakr Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh as-Saʿdī al-Basrī. He had the honour of being a Tābiʿī and he was the first person to compile a book on Hadīth. Fādil Chilpī writes in *Kashf az-Zunūn*:

هُوَّ أَوَّلُ مَنْ صَنَّفَ فِي الإِسْلاَمِ

"He was the first person to write a book in Islam."[1]

This large army reached Bārbud in 160 A.H. and accomplished many victories. This was a time when the seas were high. ʿAbd al-Malik felt it appropriate to remain there until the seas subside. While they were waiting, the winds became infected and 1 000 people succumbed to the plague. Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh *rahimahullāh* also passed away there and was buried there. This land enjoyed another honour of having such a personality to be buried in it – a personality who was the first to write a book in the field of Hadīth. In fact, the author of *Kashf az-Zunūn* considers him to be the first to write a book in Islam. (*Yād-e-Ayyām*, pp. 43-46)

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[1] Professor Maulānā Sayyid Abū Zafar Nadwī writes in *Tārīkh Gujarat*: "In my opinion, the view of Fādil Chilpī is not correct. The first person to have written a book in Islam was the grandson of Amīr Muʿāwiyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*." (marginal note in *Tārīkh Gujarat*, p. 200)

A heart-rending poem of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh*

Hadrat ʿAllāmah Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh* visited Bharūch on one occasion. While he was standing on the shore of Narbadā and observing the scene before him, he thought of the conquests of the *mujāhid*, Junayd *rahimahullāh*. He expressed his thoughts in the following poem:

O Narbadā! O Narbadā! O the main road of the Arab sea. Although you are Indian, you are a child of the Arab sea. Yes, you are a road sign to the past achievements. You are the beginning of the history of Islam in India. You know the concealed secrets of my history. My first ship had anchored at your door. You are the beginning of Islam in India. You remained an intimate friend of Islam for four centuries. The relationship between Indians and Arabs was paved through you. Every part of your shore is a reminder of it. Who remembers that old story today? Your blood flowed eternally in this body of water. You are a sea-fairy or a testimony to the world. You are the jugular vein in the neck of this sea. O Bharūch! O the ring of the river of Narbadā! May your glorious past remain forever. The tears of our eyes are your soil today. Your shore is a reminder of the past *ummah*. (*Tārīkh Gujarat*, p. 198)

Demise

He passed away in 160 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Imām Shuʿbah ibn al-Hajjāj *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Shuʿbah, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bastām, and his father's name was Hajjāj. His father was a resident of a small village by the name of Tihmān which was near the town of Wāsit. He was born in this village in 83 A.H. (*Siyar Sahābah, Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 8, p. 335)

Education and upbringing

He was brought up in Wāsit which lies between Basra and Kūfah. His academic studies commenced with poetry and literature. A short time later, he turned towards the science of Hadīth, acquired mastery in it, and became Imām al-Muhaddithīn (imām of the Hadīth scholars).

Teachers

He heard Hadīth from all the learned scholars of Hadīth of his time. There are 400 Tābiʿīs among his *shuyūkh* (those from whom he heard Hadīth), while he himself is a famous Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Acknowledgement of the *ʿulamā'*

All the *ʿulamā'* and Muhaddithūn of the time acknowledged his knowledge and merits. Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* says: "Hadrat Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh* was the greatest imām of his time in the field of Hadīth." Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* used to say: "Had it not been for

Imām Shuʿbah, the science of Hadīth would not have been so well known in Iraq." Hadrat Hammād ibn Zayd *rahimahullāh* says: "As long as Imām Shuʿbah coincides with me in the narration of a Hadīth, I do not bother about [the opinion of] anyone else."

Caution in narrating Hadīth

Despite his knowledge and expertise, he was very cautious in narrating Hadīth. He would not narrate a Hadīth until he heard it several times.

Mannerisms and character

Together with knowledge and virtue, he distinguished himself with his character, asceticism and piety. He used to perform salāh with absolute presence of heart, humility and submission. He also had a special attachment to fasting. He used to keep fast in most days of the year. Together with fulfilling the rights of Allāh *taʿālā*, he was very particular about fulfilling the rights of his fellow humans. He was most concerned about the poor and needy. Consequently, people used to refer to him as Abul Fuqarā' (father of the poor).

Fear of the Hereafter

He was fearful of the Hereafter all the time. He always feared committing a wrong for which he will be ashamed before Allāh *taʿālā* on the day of Resurrection. Based on this, Yahyā ibn Maʿīn *rahimahullāh* used to refer to him as Imām al-

Muttaqīn (the imām of the pious). (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 208)

People used to refer to him as Amīr al-Mu'minīn (leader of the believers) in the field of narration and Hadīth. He engaged in the worship of Allāh *taʿālā* so much that the bones of his body became pressed against his skin, leaving hardly any flesh in-between. If anyone wore a garment whose value was eight dirhams, he would reprimand the person saying: "You ought to have bought a *kurtah* for four dirhams, and given four dirhams in charity." A person said to him: "We dress up and adorn ourselves for those with whom we live and interact." He replied: "Who are they for whom you adorn yourself?"

If he did not have anything to give to a beggar, he would give him his donkey while he himself would walk on foot. When he boarded a ship, he would pay the fare on behalf of all those who were on board.

Note: Glory to Allāh! This was the nature of generosity and big-heartedness of our elders whom we claim to follow.

Demise

He passed away in 160 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 49)

Hadrat ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn ʿAmr al-Auzāʿī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAmr. His childhood name was ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, but he changed it to ʿAbd ar-Rahmān later on. His father's name was ʿAmr. He was born in 85 A.H. in Baʿlabakka, a famous city of Shām. He was still a child when his father passed away. He accompanied his mother to Beirut and they settled down there. He happened to go to Yamāmah on one occasion, and he began attending the classes of the famous Muhaddith, Yahyā ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh*. He was so much attracted to his classes that he remained there.

Merits

Imām Auzāʿī *rahimahullāh* is from those leading Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn who are considered to be the distinguished *mujtahidīn* of the second century of the *hijrah*. He heard Hadīth from a large group of Tābiʿīn. He started issuing *fatāwā* when he was twenty five years old.

It is stated in *Mahāsin al-Masāʿī* that after the *fajr salāh*, he would not converse with anyone unless it was about an essential matter. Instead, he would remain engaged in the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*, while his students waited for him. Once the sun rose, the teacher and students would discuss matters related to Hadīth and *fiqh*. (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, p. 247)

Note: Unfortunately, no importance is attached to *dhikr* in our times, whereas the virtues of *dhikr* are established from the Hadīth as well.

Excellent character

He was an example of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and Tābiʿīn *rahimahumullāh* in his mannerisms and character. The following were his notable qualities: abstinence, contentment, generosity, big-heartedness, frankness and forthrightness, admonishing and desiring the well-being of the *ummah*. (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 252)

He was outstanding in his worship and piety. He used to perform salāh with absolute humility and submission. A major portion of his night was especially spent in *dhikr* and optional salāh. He used to say: "The more time people spend standing in salāh at night, the less time they will spend standing on the day of Resurrection." (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 267)

Valuable statements

1. "When you receive a Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* through an authentic source, there is no room to complain and fret because whatever Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said, he said it as a messenger of Allāh *taʿālā*. (You should therefore regard it as a message from Allāh *taʿālā* Himself)."

2. “Impose the statements and actions of the *salaf-e-ṣāliḥīn* (i.e. the Ṣaḥābah and Tābiʿīn) upon yourself even if people do not support you in this regard. Any other opinion – no matter how well presented – has no importance whatsoever. Abstain from accepting such opinions. *Dīn* itself will become clear and obvious to you, and you yourself will remain on the straight path.”

Note: What excellent advice which we all ought to practise on.

3. He used to say:

العلم ما جاء عن أصحاب محمد، وما لم يجئ عنهم فليس بعلم.

“True knowledge is what has been established from the Ṣaḥābah of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. What is not established from them is not true knowledge.”

It was his habit not to engage in any conversation after the *fajr ṣalāh*. But if anyone asked him a question, he would certainly reply.

4. A Christian gave him a jar of honey as a gift and requested him to write a letter for him (for monetary help) from the governor of Baʿlabakka. He said to him: “If you really want me to write the letter, I will do it on condition you take this honey back. If not, I will accept the honey as a gift but will not write the letter.” The Christian agreed. He returned the honey to him and wrote the letter requesting monetary help for the Christian.

Subsequently, the Christian received the help which he wanted.

5. "There are ten parts to safety and wellness. Silence is equal to nine parts. And one of the ten parts is independence from people."

Note: Glory to Allāh! He explained such an important fact which we should always be conscious of.

6. He said to one of his students: "The person who thinks of death constantly will experience ease in every matter. If a person is aware of the fact that speaking is also an act (for which he is accountable), he will speak less."

7. One of his students relates that Imam Auzāʿī *rahimahullāh* used to say: "There will come a time when the greatest shortage will be of an affectionate and concerned brother, lawful earning, and following the Sunnah."

8. "Five things were found in all the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and Tābiʿīn *rahimahumullāh*: (1) Unity and harmony. (2) Following the Sunnah. (3) Constructing *masājid*. (4) Recitation of the Qur'ān. (5) Waging jihād in the cause of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: We all ought to emulate our pious elders in these deeds. In fact, we should impose them upon ourselves.

9. “When Allāh *taʿālā* wills to disgrace a people, he opens the door of disputes, dissention, argumentation and debating on them. And He closes the door of knowledge and action upon them.”

Note: We see this a lot in our times. For example, the doors of discussion and debates are wide open on the issues of *rafʿe yadayn* (raising the hands in different postures of salāh), *āmīn bil jahr* (saying *āmīn* loudly at the end of Sūrah al-Fātihah), *duʿā’* after the *fard salāh*, etc. This has resulted in criticizing and vilifying others, while there is no attention towards good deeds. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

10. “Love for Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* can be collectively found in the heart of a believer.”

Note: What an excellent sign of *īmān* as explained by him!

11. “Woe to jurists who are not ardent worshippers, and to those who make the *harām* into *halāl* through doubts. The person who innovates something in *Dīn* has in fact caused his piety and abstinence to be snatched away from him.” (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 272)

12. “When a lecturer does not deliver a talk for Allāh’s pleasure, whatever he says slips away just as water flows off a rock.”

13. “A believer speaks less, does more. A hypocrite does less, speaks more.”

14. “Remain firm on the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and adopt the view of the Ahl as-Sunnah. Abstain from whatever they abstain. Tread the path of the *salaf-e-sāliḥ*. *Īmān* does not remain level and correct without verbal affirmation. And *īmān* and verbal affirmation do not remain level and correct without action. And all these things do not remain correct without intention according to the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.”

15. Someone asked him: “Who is referred to in this Hadīth:

أكثر أمتي دخولا في الجنة أهل البله

“Those who will enter Paradise the most from my *ummah* shall be the Ahl al-Balah.”

He replied:

الذين يعرفون الخير ولا يعرفون الشرّ

“The Ahl al-Balah are those who only know good, and do not know anything about evil.” (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 172)

The following are a few statements from *Tabaqāt Kubrā*:

1. “Look at how great and mighty that Being is who created you, enabled you to see by means of fat, enabled you to hear by means of bones, and enabled you to speak by means of flesh.”

2. “There is not a single moment of this world which will not be brought before a person on the day of Resurrection. Every single day and every single moment will be brought before him. The moments which he did not spend in Allāh’s remembrance will cause him severe regret, and this regret will cause his heart to be split into smithereens. Now just imagine the condition of the person who spent hours upon hours, and days after days in heedlessness! We seek refuge in Allāh.”

3. “I have witnessed an era of people who, after they woke up and performed the *fajr salāh*, would ponder and reflect over the matters of the Hereafter and the place to which they all have to return. They would then occupy themselves with the Qur’ān and *fiqh*.”

Note: We learn from this that it is not sufficient for an *ʿālim* and a *muʿallim* (teacher) to confine themselves to studying and teaching. In fact, sometimes these activities become a veil and a cause of heedlessness. It is therefore essential to set aside a time when they engage in *dhikr* and reflection, and a special practice which is a means of establishing a bond and connection with Allāh *taʿālā*.

4. “A person who flees from his responsibility of his wife and children is like a fleeing slave whose salāh and fasting Allāh *taʿālā* does not accept until he returns to his master.”

5. “People bring gifts to us. If we were to accept them all, we will become despicable in their eyes.”

Note: Even today, this ought to be the practice of the *ʿulamā’* and *mashā’ikh* so that they do not become despicable in the eyes of the masses.

Demise

He passed away in 157 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 39)

Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī ibn Saʿīd *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Sufyān and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh. The name Thaur ibn Manāt is mentioned in his lineage. This is why he is known as Thaurī.

Family

He belonged to a well-known family of knowledge and virtue of Kūfah. His father, Saʿīd ibn Masrūq, was himself a man of knowledge and excellence. He was especially known for the narration of Ahādīth. His mother too was a very chaste woman, possessing pure character and knowledge.

Hadrat Sufyān *rahimahullāh* says: "I looked at the sky one night and felt as if my heart was not within me. I related my condition to my mother. So she said: 'It seems as if you did not look at the sky with the purpose of pondering, reflecting, and taking admonition from it. Your purpose was mere play and amusement.'" (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 8, p. 442)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the high level of *maʿrifat* (cognition) which his mother possessed! If this was her condition, we can imagine how she must have trained and tutored her children. May Allāh *taʿālā* bring into this world mothers who give birth to children like Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī

ra<u>h</u>imahullāh. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

<u>Birth</u>

He was born in 97 A.H. and moved from Kūfah to Basra in 155 A.H. He remained here until his end.

He used to abstain from eating for 2-3 days at a time. But when he experienced a defect in his worship, he would eat some food.

He is a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

<u>Words of advice</u>

1. He wrote to an *ʿābid* (worshipper): "O brother! you are presently in an era from which the Companions of Rasūlullāh *<u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to seek refuge. Whereas they possessed knowledge which we do not have, and steadfastness in *Dīn* which we do not have."

"What, then, can be said about our condition when this corrupt era has found us despite a scarcity of knowledge and patience, and a lack of helpers and assistants in matters of *Dīn*? It is therefore essential for you to hold on firmly to the first matter, and to choose anonymity for yourself. This is a time when we have to remain unknown, secluded, and to abstain from mixing too much with people. Previously, when people used to meet each other, they used to derive *Dīnī* benefit. But this has disappeared today. Today,

our success lies in giving up our interaction with people."

"O my brother! Keep away from the company of the leaders. Someone might say to you: 'But you go to the leaders and intercede on behalf of those who are in need, and obtain freedom for those who are oppressed. (What, then, is the harm in going to the leaders? It is very beneficial).' You should realize that this is a deception from Satan. And the *'ulamā'* have made this an excuse to gain proximity to the rulers and a means to obtain material benefits from them."

Note: In today's times, there is an even greater need to abstain from the companionship of leaders and affluent people. However, if there is a real need to meet them, one should not only rectify one's intention, but should make it a point to consult one's pious elders first. If a person then presents one's own needs or the needs of one's fellow brothers in a decent manner, there is no problem in it. Allāh *ta'ālā* knows best.

Statements

1. "Had I known that people are seeking knowledge for Allāh's sake, I would go to their houses and teach them. But today, their purpose is to engage in discussions, debates, and to boast and say: 'Sufyān narrated this Hadīth to me'."

2. "I did not hope to have lived for so long, wherein, when mention is made of those who are alive, the hearts become dead; and when those

who have passed away are mentioned to us, the hearts become alive."

Note: Allāh! Allāh! What serious changes took place in the people after such a short time since the demise of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. We can gauge the condition of our time and far away we have gone. So how much more important it is for us to be cautious, and to safeguard our Islam.

3. "O Allāh! When a shepherd scolds his flock, they refrain from doing what they want. How unfortunate, Your Qur'ān stops us from acting on our desires, but we do not refrain."

4. "A man said to Hadrat ʿĪsā *ʿalayhis salām*: 'Advise me.' He said: 'Look at where you get your bread from.'" (In other words, is it coming through *halāl* means or *harām* means?)

5. "If the *ʿulamā'* become corrupt, who is going to rectify them? Their corruption is when they become inclined towards this world."

Note: These are admonitory words which ought to be borne in mind.

6. "I like a student to have sufficient wealth to fulfil his needs because when he is poor and needy, calamities and criticisms of people come upon him."

Note: Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Wasīyyullāh *rahimahullāh* used to quote this statement of Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh* repeatedly to us, and he used to quote the teachings of our pious elders in support of it.

7. "When you complain of your illness to your fellow brother, it does not entail complaining to Allāh *taʿālā*."

8. "There are five just imāms: Hadrat Abū Bakr, Hadrat ʿUmar, Hadrat ʿUthmān, Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhum,* and Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh*. A person who considers anyone else to be just has committed a wrong.

9. "If a person obeys all the orders of Allāh *taʿālā* but has love for this world, then the following announcement will be made on the day of Resurrection before all the creation: 'Such and such person loved a thing which Allāh *taʿālā* abhorred.' This person will feel so ashamed, that the flesh on his face will get cut into pieces and fall off."

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* – through His grace – protect us from love for this world, and may He give us refuge from its consequences on the day of Resurrection. Āmīn.

10. "I would rather pass away leaving behind 10 000 dīnārs for which I will have to give an account than remaining dependent on people. Previously, wealth was disliked, but today it is a

shield which protects a person from the humiliation of begging from the wealthy people and the rulers."

11. He used to refuse gifts. He used to say: "If I knew that these people will not boast to others about giving gifts to me, I would have accepted their gifts." This is why he would rather remain hungry than take a loan from someone. He used to say: "These people who give loans will not be able to conceal it. Instead, they will go around telling people: 'Sufyān Thaurī came to me last night and took a loan from me.'"

12. "A person has wealth but he still remains an ascetic. Another person is poor but he is greedy for this world (this is why he is considered to be from among the materialists)."

13. "I prefer living in a place where no one knows me."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how concerned he was about concealing his condition. This is why Allāh *ta'ālā* elevated his position and honoured him. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* conveys this as follows:

"The one who obliterates his name and existence has become the king of the world."

14. "When you see your fellow brother seeking leadership, put him back."

Note: Because one has to obliterate one's self in this path. When a person desires popularity and leadership of his own accord, there is no good in him. He has fallen very far away from the path of Allāh *taʿālā*. Unfortunately, we are running behind this very thing irrespective of whether we acquire it or not. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

15. "The two angels perceive the smell of good deeds and bad deeds when the heart intends either of the two. Just as these two angels do not harm you, you should not harm them."

Note: In other words, do not harm them by committing sins. Instead, keep them happy through acts of obedience.

16. Someone asked him about a person who earns for his wife and children, but if he were to perform salāh with congregation, he will not be able to tend to his children. He said: "He must obtain sustenance for his children, and perform salāh on his own."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his wise words which certainly affirm his deep understanding. In short, every statement of his is an excellent advice and ought to be practised on. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

He passed away in Basra in 161 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 42)

Hadrat Sufyān ibn ʻUyaynah *rahimahullāh*

Family

He was from a slave family. His father's name was ʻUyaynah, and his grandfather's name was Abū ʻImrān Maymūn. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 8, p. 289)

Birth and education

He was born in 107 A.H. in Kūfah and settled down in Makkah. He has the honour of being a Tabaʻ Tābiʻī.

He memorized the Qur'ān when he was four years old, and commenced writing Hadīth when he was seven years old. Whenever anyone gave him a gift, he would say: "Give it so such and such person because he is more in need than me."

Statements

1. "The person who remains patient at the time of affliction and accepts what is destined for him has reached the level of perfection."

2. "It is sufficient to render a person evil when he sees evil within himself and does nothing to rectify it."

Note: This is because when a person ponders over his condition, he must rectify himself accordingly. Every person is in need of rectification.

3. “The rectification of two qualities is difficult: (1) To sever all desire for the wealth and possessions which others have. (2) To do a deed solely for Allāh *taʿālā*.”

Note: This is certainly correct, but there is general heedlessness in this regard.

4. “If my day is spent like a foolish person’s, and my night is spent like an ignorant person’s, then of what benefit is my knowledge?”

Note: This shows that our pious elders were not unmindful of their own rectification. In fact, they were more concerned about it than ordinary people like us.

5. “The *kalimah tayyibah – Lā ilāha illallāh* – is as essential as water in this world. The one who has this *kalimah* is living, and the one who does not have it is dead.”

6. “Allāh *taʿālā* did not bestow a greater gift to His servants than the *maʿrifat* of *Lā ilāha illallāh.* Without doubt, *Lā ilāha illallāh* is as essential as water in this world.”

Note: Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* has expounded on the essence and loftiness of this *kalimah* in a most brilliant manner in his *Maktūbāt*. It is worth reading it.

7. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* says in a Hadīth:

مَنْ غَشَّنَا فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا

"The one who deceives us is not of us."

If a person explains the above Hadīth and others similar to it by saying that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* means that such a person is not following our way and not on our straight path, then he has actually been disrespectful because abstaining from an explanation of this Hadīth entails a greater reprimand and rebuke.

8. "Abstinence in this world entails patience over hardship and difficulty, and waiting for death."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent statement. We ought to make it an amulet in our life.

9. "Zam zam water is like perfume which cannot be refused."

Note: Glory to Allāh! We learn from this that, like perfume, we should not decline zam zam water when it is offered to us.

10. "Khadir *ʿalayhis salām* advised Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* not to embarrass anyone over a sin which he committed."

Note: This shows that embarrassing a person over a sin which he committed is a sin in itself. It is essential for us to abstain from this.

11. When he used to complete his salāh, he would say: "O Allāh! Pardon me for any shortcomings in my salāh."

12. "There are many who portray abstention from this world, but Allāh *taʿālā* is aware of what is in their hearts – i.e. they love this world." May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us from it.

13. "It is desirous for a person to conceal his poverty because it is from among the good deeds. However, it is very difficult on the *nafs* to conceal poverty."

14. "There are ten parts to jihād. One is to wage [physical] jihād against the enemy, the other nine are against one's *nafs*."

Note: This shows the importance of jihād against one's *nafs*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* referred to it as *jihād-e-akbar* – the greatest jihād.

15. "Come for salāh even before the *adhān* is called out. Do not be like the useless slave who will never come to salāh if he is not called to it."

16. "The most harmful knowledge for you is the one on which you do not practise." (*Tabaqāt Kubrā*, p. 48)

Note: These are excellent words of advice which ought to be borne in mind.

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We now quote some of his statements from *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn* of Hadrat Maulānā Mujībullāh Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh*.

1. "The person who is a means to create a bond between Allāh *taʿālā* and His servants holds the highest rank in Allāh's *taʿālā* sight."

Note: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

خِيَارُكُمْ مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللهِ وَحَبَّبَ عِبَادَهُ إِلَيْهِ

"The best of you is the one who calls towards Allāh *taʿālā* and makes Allāh's servants beloved to Him." (*Fayd al-Qadīr*, vol. 3, p. 463)

2. "When an *ʿālim* gives up saying: 'I do not know', he prepares himself for his own destruction."

Note: In other words, when a person makes claims to know everything, he certainly falls into despicable characteristics, viz. arrogance and haughtiness. This conveys him towards destruction.

3. "Respect of salāh involves coming to the musjid before the time of salāh."

4. Is-hāq ibn Isrāʾīl relates: "I heard this personally from Hadrat Sufyān. He used to say: 'Tread the correct path and do not opt for erroneous ways, no matter how few those who are

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treading the correct path are, and how many those who opt for erroneous ways are.'"

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a principle, viz. the matter is not about majority and minority, it is about treading the right path. This is what has to be followed.

5. "Three people will be extremely remorseful and regretful on the day of Resurrection:

(1) A master who will be surpassed by his slave in good deeds."

Note: Obviously, the slave will be rewarded while his master will be deprived. This will cause the master much regret.

(2) A wealthy person who accumulated wealth by working hard and striving for it, but did not fulfil the Sharʿī rights of his wealth. When his inheritors received the wealth, they spent it for Allāh's *taʿālā* cause.

Note: In other words, they fulfilled the Sharʿī rights which were due on the wealth. In such a case, the inheritors will be rewarded while the person who initially earned it will be deprived.

(3) An *ʿālim* who did not benefit himself from his knowledge, while others derived knowledge from him, benefited from it, and conveyed benefits to others.

Note: Those who practised on the *ʿālim's* knowledge will be awarded high ranks on the day of Resurrection, while the non-practising *ʿālim* will be deprived. On seeing this, the *ʿālim* will be most disappointed.

6. Hadrat Ahnaf ibn Qays *rahimahullāh* narrates: "Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: 'Acquire understanding of *Dīn* before a responsibility is given to you.' Hadrat Sufyān *rahimahullāh* explains this as follows: 'When a person acquires understanding of *Dīn*, he will not seek positions and leadership.'"

Note: If leadership is given to a person without his seeking it, he will fulfil its responsibility in accordance with Allāh's pleasure, through his knowledge and understanding. This will be a cause of good fortune for him.

Demise

He resided in Makkah Mukarramah, passed away there in 198 A.H., and was buried in Hajūn [a district of Makkah]. He was 91 years old at the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 49)

Hadrat Musʿir ibn Kidām *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Musʿir, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Salamah, and his father's name was Kidām ibn Zuhayr.

He was a distinguished Tabaʿ Tābiʿī as regards his *Dīnī* and academic merits.

Asceticism and worship

His son, Muhammad, relates: "My father would not go to sleep without first reading half the Qur'ān. When he completed his recitation, he would cover himself with a sheet and fall asleep. After taking a short nap, he would get up suddenly like a person who has lost something and is anxiously searching for it. On waking up, he would perform *wudū'*, make *miswāk*, and stand up for salāh. He would continue until the time of *fajr salāh*. Despite all this, he used to conceal his worship."

Fear for the Hereafter and soft-heartedness

He would remain trembling and fearful all the time out of fear for the questioning on the day of Resurrection. Ibn Jauzī *rahimahullāh* writes that he would be overcome by weeping all the time – while standing, sitting, walking around, and performing salāh. (*Sifatus Safwah*, p. 73)

Hadrat Ibn ʿUyaynah *rahimahullāh* relates: "I saw Hadrat Musʿir progressing in good daily." Hadrat

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Maʿn *rahimahullāh* says: "Everyday we found him better than the previous day." He had reached such a high level of worship, spiritual exercises and noble character that people had no doubt about his being a *Jannatī* (a person destined for Paradise).

Service to his mother

His mother asked for water on one occasion, but she fell asleep by the time he came with the water. He remained standing with the glass of water in his hand until the morning – waiting for her to wake up.

He used to remain in his mother's service all the time. He used to say: "If my mother was not here, I would not have separated myself from the musjid unless it was for essential work."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his level of service to his mother. This has disappeared today.

Fear of Allāh *taʿālā*

When he used to enter the musjid, he would be crying. When leaving the musjid, he would be crying. When performing salāh, he would be crying. When sitting down, he would be crying. In short, he would be crying in every situation.

Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh* went to visit him when he was on his death-bed, and said: "O Musʿir! Why are you so restless? By Allāh, I desire to die immediately." Musʿir said: "O Sufyān! You

have full confidence and reliance on your deeds (that is why you have a desire to die). As for me, I feel as if I am on the top of a high mountain, and I do not know when I will be thrown off it." On hearing this, Sufyān *rahimahullāh* began crying and said: "O Musʿir! You have more fear of Allāh *taʿālā* than me."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the high position of Hadrat Sufyān *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Musʿir *rahimahullāh*! Yet they acknowledged their shortcomings. This has been the distinguishing quality of our pious elders. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to choose their ways as well.

Statements

1. "There are some servants of Allāh *taʿālā* who, if they learnt that a certain calamity is about to descend, would welcome it because of their love, value and respect for Allāh *taʿālā*. When the calamity descends, there is no question whatsoever of expressing any disapproval."

2. "Do not sit unoccupied because death is seeking you."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What admonitory and instructive statements!

3. He was asked: "Who is the most senior jurist from the people of Madīnah?" He replied: "The one who fears Allāh *taʿālā* the most is the most senior jurist."

4. He was asked: “Would you like anyone to make mention of your faults?” He replied: “If the person is my well-wisher, I would like it. But if his advice is for the sake of disgracing and humiliating me, then I will not like it.”

5. “Do not speak in praise of the *ʿālim* who accepts gifts from the rulers, and has houses built of solid brick.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent teaching of asceticism and abstention. This ought to be borne in mind. Now observe his disavowal of the post of judge in the next statement.

6. Abū Jaʿfar Mansūr called him to hand over the post of judge to him. He said: “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn! Wait a bit. My condition is such that if my people at home ask me to purchase an item for one dirham, I tell them: ‘Very well, I will buy it and bring it to you.’ They say: ‘We do not like what you buy.’ So if my people at home are not happy with my choice in buying a necessary item which costs just one dirham, how can you hand over the post of judge to such a person?!’ On hearing this, he absolved him and said: ‘O Musʿir! Had I been an ordinary Muslim like you, I would have walked to you and served you.’”

7. “The person who is happy to eat vinegar, vegetables and herbs cannot be enslaved by anyone.”

8. If anyone came to him and requested him to make *duʿā'* for him, he would say: "You make *duʿā'* for yourself and I will say *āmīn*." This is because a genuine *duʿā'* can only be made by the person who is in need.

Hadrat ʿAllāmah ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* says: "I have heard a similar narration with regard to Hadrat Maʿrūf Karkhī *rahimahullāh*. This, despite the fact that he was a person whose *duʿā's* used to be accepted (i.e. he was *mustajāb ad-daʿwāt*)." Allāh *taʿālā* knows best.

9. "On the day of Resurrection, the night worship [of a person] will be a light for him which will move all around him. And fasting during the day will keep a person far away from the fire of Hell."

10. "An announcer will call out on the day of Resurrection: 'O you who used to praise Allāh *taʿālā*! Stand up!' No one will stand up except the one who used to read *Qul huwallāhu ahad* (Sūrah al-Ikhlās) in abundance."

Note: We should all make it a habit to read this sūrah abundantly. Murshidī Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to instruct us to make a habit of reading this sūrah.

Demise

He passed away in 155 A.H. in Kūfah. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, pp. 49-50)

Hadrat ʿAlī and Hasan, the two sons of Sāliḥ ibn Hayy *raḥimahumullāh*

Name

ʿAlī and Hasan are two brothers. Their father's name is Sāliḥ, and their grandfather's name is Hayy.

Merits

They were both ascetics and ardent worshippers. They used to divide the night into three parts. ʿAlī would engage in worship in one third, and then sleep. Hasan would wake up and engage in worship. When he would go to sleep, his mother would wake up in the last part of the night and engage in worship. When their mother passed away, they divided her part among themselves and spent the whole night in worship in this way. Both brothers have the honour of being Tabaʿ Tābiʿīs.

Recitation of the Qur'ān

In the course of their night worship, it was the practice of each one to recite one third of the Qur'ān. When the mother and ʿAlī passed away, Hassan began reading the entire Qur'ān in one night.

An excellent example

If a beggar came to him and he had nothing to give him, he would give him an ember from the fire and tell him to go to such and such

residential area, the people there might give him something in return for the ember, and in this way his need will be fulfilled.

If he had to advise a person, he would not do it directly on his face. He would write it on a piece of paper and send it to him.

Statements

1. "When an *ʿālim* does not fear Allāh *taʿālā*, he is not an *ʿālim*."

2. "Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib said: 'If a person remains seated in the musjid all the time and accepts whatever gift is given to him, then he has actually persisted and insisted in begging.'"

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at what a fine line the shaykh drew on the issue of begging. A person remains seated in the musjid, people believe him to be a pious person, and therefore give him gifts.

3. "We investigated what asceticism is and found it to be in the one who speaks the least."

When he used to see a graveyard, he would fall down unconscious.

4. "Acts of piety result in strength in the body, effulgence in the heart, and lustre in the eyes. Evil deeds result in lethargy in the body, darkness in the heart, and blindness in the eyes."

5. “A person cannot be a perfect jurist unless his condition is such that when Allāh *taʿālā* takes the world away from him and gives it to his friends, he is happy about it.”

Demise

ʿAlī *rahimahullāh* passed away in Kūfah in 154 A.H. and Hasan *rahimahullāh* passed away thirteen years later. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on them. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 50)

Hadrat ʿAbd al-Wāhid ibn Zayd *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbd al-Wāhid, his title is Abū ʿUbaydah Basrī, and his father's name is Zayd. He met Hadrat Hasan Basrī *rahimahullāh* and others.

He was very strict in his adherence to salāh, fasting, etc. and is listed among the Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn.

Statements

1. "A believer is like a child in a womb which does not like to come out of it. When it comes out of it, it does not want to go back. When a believer leaves the world he experiences the same emotion, i.e. he does not want to return to it."

2. "You must certainly eat *rotī* (flat round leavened bread) and salt because they melt the fat of the kidney, and they increase one's conviction."

3. "The best condition of a servant in this world is for him to be in agreement with Allāh *taʿālā*. If Allāh *taʿālā* keeps him in this world for obedience, he must accept it. And if He takes him away from this world, he must be happy with it."

4. "When a person is given something in this world but he desires something else, Allāh *taʿālā* snatches away the enjoyment of solitude with

Him. He replaces closeness with distance, and affinity with aloofness."

Demise

He either passed away in 150 A.H. or 177 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʿ*, vol. 7, p. 178)

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is ʿAbdullāh, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, and his father's name is Mubārak. His father, Hadrat Mubārak, was a slave of a certain master. His master was very much impressed by Mubārak's piety, worship and devotion to Allāh *taʿālā*; so he got his daughter married to him. Hadrat ʿAbdullāh *rahimahullāh* was born from this fortunate woman in 118 A.H. in Marw. His original residence was in Marw, and that is why he is referred to as Marwazī. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 8, p. 306)

Education

No one in his era equalled ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak in the number of journeys he undertook for the sake of knowledge. He travelled to distant lands to seek knowledge. He went to Yemen, Egypt, Shām, Kūfah, Basra, and other places. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 8, p. 306)

His shuyūkh

He is from among the special students of Hadrat Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. He loved Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* intensely and was very attached to him. He used to say: "Whatever I accomplished was because of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* and Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh*."

He is a distinguished Tabaʿ Tabiʿī as regards his knowledge and merit.

A comprehensive personality

ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh* was extremely intelligent and sharp, and possessed an extraordinary memory. He was an expert in all sciences, but had a special affinity with memorizing and narrating Hadīth. (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, p. 327)

Character and habits

He was an example of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* in his worship, spiritual exercises, asceticism, piety, character and habits. He was an icon of etiquette and good social behaviour. He used to say: "Etiquette and good social behaviour are two parts of *Dīn*."

His respect and etiquette in an assembly of Hadīth were worth observing. Even in any other ordinary assembly, he could not tolerate to see anything which was against Islam. A person sneezed in an assembly, but he did not say *al-hamdulillāh*. He waited for some time and then addressed the person saying: "Brother, what should you say when you sneeze?" The man replied: "*Al-hamdulillāh*." He said: "*Yarhamukallāh* (may Allāh have mercy on you)." (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 335)

Wise statements

1. "The materialist people of this world depart from the world without having enjoyed the most desirable and delicious thing of it." People asked him: "What is the most delicious thing it?" He replied: "The *maʿrifat* of Allāh *taʿālā*."

2. "I prefer not spending a single dirham obtained from doubtful sources to giving 100 dirhams in charity."

3. "I did not tire of searching for anything apart from a friend who loves solely for the sake of Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: If this was the situation in the era of Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak, what can be said of our era!? Such a friend is extremely rare.

4. "A person cannot be a true *ʿālim* unless there is Allāh's fear in his heart and he has no inclination for this world."

5. Someone asked him: "What is humility?" He replied: "To remain forthright before the wealthy."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent definition of humility. This is because humbling one's self before wealthy people is not humility. Rather, it entails humiliating one's self, and useless flattery which is disliked.

6. "The first thing which is necessary for knowledge is an intention, then a will, then

understanding, followed by practising on it, memorizing it, and then propagating it and passing it on to others."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh* explained several stages which follow one after the other for the propagation and conveying of knowledge. This proves his wisdom and insight. Since no consideration is given to this today, correct and proper knowledge is not being acquired. This results in a shortcoming and defect in its propagation as well. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

7. Abū Wahb Marwazī *rahimahullāh* asked him for a definition of haughtiness, so he said: "To look down on people and find fault with them." He asked for a definition of self-ego, so he said: "When a person feels that others do not have what he has."

8. A person asked him about jihād and making preparations for it, so he said: "You must keep your *nafs* steadfast on the truth until it automatically remains steadfast on it. This is the greatest jihād." This is an exact translation of the following Hadīth:

اَلْمُجَاهِدُ مَنْ جَاهَدَ نَفْسَهُ

"A mujāhid is one who strives against his self." (Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn, vol. 1, p. 347)

Note: This also demonstrates Hadrat ʿAllāmah's knowledge and wisdom in the sense that he defined the greatest jihād in a manner which is fully supported by the Hadīth. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to a group of Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* who had returned from jihād:

قدمتم من الجهاد الأصغر إلى الجهاد الأكبر، قيل يا رسول الله، ما الجهاد الأكبر. قال الجهاد النفس (قال العراقي رواه البيهقي في كتاب الزهد–اللامع الدراري، ج٢، ص٤٧٢)

"You have returned from a minor jihād and come to a major jihād." He was asked: "O Rasūlullāh! What is the major jihād?" He replied: "It is jihād with the nafs."

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* sought refuge from the evil of the *nafs*. He said:

أَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّيْ أَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِيْ

"O Allāh! I seek refuge from the evil of my nafs."

A Hadīth refers to the *nafs* as the biggest enemy:

أَعْدَى عَدُوِّكَ نَفْسُكَ الَّتِيْ بَيْنَ جَنْبَيْكَ

"Your biggest enemy is your nafs which is between your two sides."

When an enemy is powerful, it is difficult to combat him. A person will have to undergo

strenuous exercise to overpower him. This is why fighting the *nafs* is referred to as a major jihād.

We now quote a few statements from *Tabaqāt Kubrā*:

1. He preferred studying the lives of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and Tābiʿīn *rahimahumullāh* to sitting in the company of the *ʿulamā'* of his time. He used to say: "When any of you learns a sufficient amount of the Qur'ān whereby he can perform his salāh correctly, he must occupy himself in seeking knowledge. This is because knowledge will enable him to understand the Qur'ān."

2. "In the present times, I have not come across a person who accepts advice open heartedly."

Note: This is something to think about. He is talking about the situation in the second century. What, then, can be said about the situation today? Let alone not accepting advice, people do not even want to listen to any advice. In fact, the situation today is such that a person considers the one who advises him to be his enemy.

3. "One of the prerequisites for a person to be an *ʿālim* is that even the slightest danger of love for this world must not cross his heart."

4. He was asked: "Who are the despicable people?" He replied: "Those who make their *Dīn* a means of livelihood."

5. "How can a person make claims to having a lot of knowledge when he is found wanting as regards fear [of Allāh *taʿālā*] and abstinence?"

6. "Many small deeds become large because of the intention [with which they are done]. Many great deeds become insignificant because of the intention [with which they are done]."

7. Whenever he felt like eating, he would not eat until he finds a guest to join him in the meal. He used to say: "We have been told that there is no accountability for what the guest eats."

8. He used to feed *fālūdā* and *ḫalwā* (sweetmeats) to his companions while he himself was fasting. Someone said to him: "Your wealth has decreased now, so you should cut down your generosity to people." He replied: "So what if my wealth has decreased? Hasn't my life-span also decreased?"

Note: What a beautiful reply portraying the fleeting nature of this world and the eternal life of the Hereafter.

9. "Remain desirous of anonymity, and abhor popularity. But do not be satisfied by your *nafs* for desiring anonymity and obscurity because this too can create pride in your *nafs*."

Note: A person asked Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* about remaining in solitude. In accordance with the person's situation and condition, Hadrat *rahimahullāh* prohibited him from solitude, and said: "Your solitude may become well-known among people, and popularity of this nature could lead to calamities for you."

10. "Your claims to asceticism will remove you from asceticism." He also said: "The king of asceticism is greater than the king of people. This is because the king of people controls them by his power and force. On the other hand, the ascetic flees from people while they run after him [seek his companionship]."

11. Someone complained to him that some scholars were collecting zakāh from them. He said: "What should we do? If we stop them, they will desist seeking knowledge. If we permit them, they will continue in their quest for knowledge. Obviously, acquisition of knowledge is not only better, but essential."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What words of wisdom and intelligence. These personalities possessed perfect knowledge which was accompanied by perfection in intelligence and wisdom. This is why they would bear in mind the general good and guide their people accordingly. Serving *Dīn* has to be essentially complemented by intelligence and wisdom. If not, instead of goodness and rectitude,

lack of intelligence could open the doors to dissent, problems, and mutual conflict.

12. “I consider it better to return a single dirham obtained through doubtful means to spending 70 000 000 dirhams in charity.”

13. The excessive worship of Yūsuf ibn Asbāṯ was mentioned to him, so he said: “You have mentioned such people from whose mere mention we can obtain a cure. But if everyone were to do this [engage in full-time worship], who will remain to follow the Sunnats of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*? Who will carry out good deeds like visiting the sick and attending funerals?” He mentioned a few other similar good deeds.

14. Someone asked him: “How do the angels know that a person has intended to do a good deed?” He replied: “They perceive its fragrance.” He used to say: “Mercy descends when righteous people are remembered.”

15. “Do not disregard three groups: (1) *ʿulamāʾ*, (2) rulers, (3) brothers. The one who disregards the *ʿulamāʾ* will have his Hereafter destroyed. The one who disregards and belittles the rulers will have his worldly affairs destroyed. The one who demeans his brothers will destroy his self-respect.”

16. “If a person withholds such an amount of worldly possessions through which he will save himself from the humiliation of begging to people,

then this will not remove him from abstention [he will still be regarded as an abstentious person]." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 51)

Demise

He passed away in 181 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, p. 348)

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Yūsuf Isfahānī *rahimahullāh*

Name, merits

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Yūsuf, and his grandfather's name is Miʿdān, who was a leader of the ascetics and worshippers. His *kunnīyyat* was Abū ʿAbdillāh Isfahānī, and he was a very senior ascetic.

Affirmation of *ʿulamā'*

Yahyā ibn Qattān *rahimahullāh* said: "I have not seen a better person than him." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 9, p. 125)

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh* used to describe him as ʿArūs al-ʿUbbād wa az-Zuhhād (the bride of the worshippers and ascetics).

A noteworthy example to emulate

When he used to see a Christian, he would be amiable towards him, be hospitable to him and give him gifts so that he may become inclined towards Islam.

Note: Just ponder! Muhammad ibn Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* would honour a Christian and send gifts to him in order to attract him towards Islam. Unfortunately, our condition is such that we malign Islam through our actions and unworthy character. Consequently, non-Muslims are distancing themselves from Islam, but we are not

bothered about it. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Worship

He used to sleep in winter but not in summer. He would merely lie down after *fajr* for a short while. He would then get up and perform *wuḏū'*, and spend the morning in such a manner that his face would be beaming like a groom's.

Demise

He passed away in 184 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Ṯabaqāt*, p. 52)

Hadrat Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāh ar-Rawāsī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage and birth

His name was Wakīʿ, his *kunnīyyat* was ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ar-Rawāsī, and his father's name was Jarrāh. He was born in 149 A.H. in Kūfah. However Baghdādī relates through a transmission of Imām Wakīʿ wherein it is stated that when he was asked about his birth, he said:

ولدتُ سنة ثمان وعشرين ومائة

"I was born in 128 A.H."

Acquisition of knowledge

Imām Wakīʿ *rahimahullāh* studied under practically all the fountains of knowledge of his time. Until his era, knowledge used to be passed on from heart to heart. The hardships and difficulties which the *ʿulamā'* of the past bore for the acquisition of knowledge is known to the *ʿulamā'*. He enjoys a distinguished position among the Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn.

Shuyūkh

According to one narration, Imām Wakīʿ *rahimahullāh* heard Hadīth from Imām Aʿzam Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* and his senior students, Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* and Imām Zufar *rahimahullāh*. Baghdādī also states that Wakīʿ

heard Hadīth from Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. He says:

وكان قد سمع منه شيئا كثيرا

"He heard a lot [of Ahādīth] from him."

Damīr *rahimahullāh* also lists him among the students of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*.

Intelligence and memory

Is-hāq ibn Rāhwayh *rahimahullāh* says: "We got a memory through toiling, while Imām Wakīʿ had a natural memory." The son of Imām Wakīʿ says: "I never saw a book or piece of paper in my father's hand."

ʿAlī ibn Hashram says: "I never saw a book in the hand of Imām Wakīʿ. He used to deliver lessons solely from his memory. On observing his mind-boggling memory, I asked him for some medication which could strengthen my memory. He replied:

ترك المعاصي ما جربت مثله للحفظ

"I have not experienced anything greater than abstention from sins for the strengthening of the memory."

Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* relates an incident in the form of a poem:

شَكَوْتُ إِلى وَكِيْعٍ سُوْءَ حِفْظِيْ – فَأَوْصَانِيْ إِلى تَرْكِ الْمَعَاصِيْ
وَعَلَّلَهُ بِأَنَّ الْعِلْمَ فَضْلٌ – وَفَضْلُ اللهِ لاَ يُعْطى لِعَاصِيْ

"I complained to Hadrat Wakī' about my bad memory, so he instructed me to abstain from sins. He explained it by saying that knowledge is a grace, and Allāh's grace is not given to a sinner."

Merits in character

His fear and submission were of a very high level. Hadrat Ibn Ma'īn *rahimahullāh* says: "I heard Wakī' saying the following very often:

أَيَّ يَوْمٍ لَنَا مِنَ الْمَوْتِ

"Which day will our death occur?"

Dā'ūd ibn Yahyā says: "I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* in a dream. I said to him: 'O Rasūlullāh! Who are the *auliyā'*?' He replied: 'They are those who do not cause any physical harm to people. And Wakī' is certainly from among them.'"

Worship

His spending the night in worship had full impact on his entire household. Everyone, including the workers, was regular with *tahajjud*. Ibrāhīm ibn Wakī' says:

كَانَ أَبِيْ يُصَلِّي الليلَ فلا يَبْقَى في دارِنا أحدٌ إلاَّ صَلَّى حتّى أنَّ جاريةً لنا سَوْدَاءَ لَتُصَلِّيْ.

"When my father used to perform salāh at night, every single person in our house would perform salāh. So much so, even our black slave-woman would perform salāh." (Siyar Sahābah, vol. 9, p. 389)

Statements

1. "Asceticism is in the *halāl*, and there is no *halāl* at all now. You should therefore regard the world like a corpse and only take of it what is essential for your survival."

2. When any person offended or harmed him, he would place soil on his own head and say: "If I was not a sinner, this person would not have been empowered over me." He would then engage in excessive *istighfār* (seeking forgiveness) until the person would desist from harming him.

Demise

He passed away in 197 A.H. and was buried on the road to Iraq when he was returning from hajj. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 54)

Hadrat ʿAmr ibn Maymūn al-Audī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAmr and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh. His father's name is Maymūn. He was a famous and well-known Tabaʿ Tābiʿī, a reliable narrator, an ardent worshipper, and an ascetic. He was a resident of Kūfah.

Conditions

Bearing difficulties for Allāh's cause was his beloved occupation. Meeting his beloved Allāh *taʿālā* was his greatest wish. He adhered strictly to worship and spiritual exercises throughout his Islamic life.

Hadrat Ibrāhīm *rahimahullāh* says: "When ʿAmr ibn Maymūn became old, he knocked a nail in the wall. When he used to get tired in the course of his lengthy salāh, he would take support from the nail, or he would tie a rope to the nail and hold on to the rope."

Yūnus ibn Abū Is-hāq relates: "When ʿAmr ibn Maymūn used to enter the musjid, he would remain fully engrossed in the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*."

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Statements

1. "The *masājid* are the houses of Allāh *taʿālā*, and it is necessary for the host to honour his guests and to shower His attention on them."

2. "From all the words which are uttered by people, the most superior words are: *Lā ilāha illallāh*."

Note: All his statements are very beneficial. *Māshā Allāh*.

Demise

He either passed away in 74 A.H. or 75 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 4, p. 126)

Hadrat Abū Is-hāq Ibrāhīm al-Harawī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Is-hāq al-Harawī, and his father's name is ʿAbdullāh ibn Hātim.

He was an extremely honest and pure-hearted person. He used to remain in worship all the time. He remained in the company of Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham. He is a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

A sincere person is tutored and nurtured by Allāh *taʿālā*

He related the following about himself: I stayed in a forest for some time. I would neither eat, drink, nor have a desire for anything. Consequently, my *nafs* said to me that I have acquired a condition of unity with Allāh *taʿālā*. Immediately thereafter, someone whose identity I could not perceive addressed me from my right side. He said to me: 'O Ibrāhīm! You are showing off to Allāh *taʿālā* from within yourself. Do you know for how long I have been living here without eating, drinking or having a desire for anything?' I replied: 'Allāh *taʿālā* knows best.' He said: 'For eighty days. But I am ashamed before Allāh *taʿālā* lest any thoughts like yours enter my heart. (By virtue of this, *al-hamdulillāh*), my condition is such that if I were to take an oath in Allāh's name and ask Him to turn this tree into gold, He will certainly do it.'

This incident was a powerful unseen warning for me." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 55)

Note: This shows that we must never be proud over our actions. Allāh *taʿālā* certainly has servants who are of different levels, one better than the other, and not known to all. We also learn that when a genuine *sālik* errs or slips up, Allāh *taʿālā* – through His grace and kindness – makes arrangements for his tutoring and rectification, through which he can come out of its destructive consequences.

Statements

1. Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm relates: "I heard my father saying: 'If a person wants his *duʿā's* to be accepted, he must adhere to five things: (1) eat only an amount which is essential, (2) have clothes which are necessary, (3) sleep as much as is essential, (4) speak as much as is necessary, (5) remain humble and submissive, and always protect the different body parts from sins.'"

2. "Three things are necessary for the acquisition of Paradise: (1) to have full conviction in the promises of Allāh *taʿālā*, (2) be pleased with the decisions and decrees of Allāh *taʿālā*, (3) be sincere in optional acts of worship."

Note: He probably added the condition of "optional" because this is when show and ostentation creep in. As for the compulsory acts, when a person carries them out, he neither considers himself to be pious nor do others

regard him as such. (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 10, p. 44)

Demise

He passed away at the age of 66 in 144 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, p. 90)

Hadrat ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawād *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān and his name is ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawād.

Information about him

He was a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī who engaged in a lot of worship, and bore many calamities and hardships. He was losing his eyesight and his own house-people did not come to know about it for twenty years. His son became doubtful one day so he asked him about it. He said: "Yes, my son. It is twenty years since your father lost his eyesight by Allāh's will." Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Muqrī *rahimahullāh* says: "I have not seen anyone more patient in standing in salāh than ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Abī Rawād."

Yūsuf ibn Asbāt *rahimahullāh* narrates: "He did not raise his eyes to the skies for forty years."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his high level of respect! If such people are not blessed, who else can be? There is a famous saying: "The one who is respectful, shall profit. The one who is disrespectful, shall lose."

Statements

1. "A person who takes admonitions from three things will not need to take admonition from

anything else: (1) Islam, (2) the Qur'ān, (3) old age."

2. He was asked: "What is the best worship?" He replied: "To remain concerned by day and night."

Note: Obviously, the best worship will be of the one who is very concerned, worried and fearful of the Hereafter. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself used to be worried all the time about the Hereafter. He used to say:

لا عيش إلا عيش الآخرة

"The real life is the life of the Hereafter."

3. He used to narrate from his father: Allāh *taʿālā* sent revelation to Hadrat Dā'ūd *ʿalayhis salām* saying: "Convey glad tidings to the sinners, and relate such things to the *siddīqīn* by which they fear." He was surprised at this, so he asked: "O my Allāh! Must I convey glad tidings to the sinners, and instil fear in the *siddīqīn*!?" Allāh *taʿālā* said: "Yes. Say to them that any sin which I pardon is not greater than Me. And say to the *siddīqīn* not to get trapped into conceit by their good deeds because if I were to treat any of My slave with justice and equity, he will be destroyed." (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 8, p. 65)

Note: This shows that Allāh's mercy and beneficence are essential for salvation. Deeds are not enough.

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Demise

He passed away in 159 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, p. 157)

Hadrat Wuhayb ibn Ward Makkī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His *kunnīyyat* is Abū Umayyah, and others say it is Abū ʻUthmān. His name is Wuhayb, and it is also said that his name is ʻAbd al-Wahhāb.

Merits

He was a resident of Makkah Mukarramah. He met several Tābiʻīn, e.g. Hadrat ʻAtā' ibn Abī Rabāh, Hadrat Mansūr ibn Zādhān, Hadrat Abān ibn Abī ʻAyāsh, and Hadrat Muhammad ibn Zuhayr *rahimahumullāh*. He became popular as a senior Tabaʻ Tābiʻī by virtue of narrating [Ahādīth] from these senior scholars.

Muhammad ibn Yazīd says: "I noticed Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh* doing the following: When he used to complete delivering his Hadīth lesson in Musjid-e-Harām, he would say to his students:

قوموا إلى الطبيب يعني وُهَيبا

"Go to the physician, i.e. Wuhayb."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the humility of our elders! It is most worthy of emulation.

Statements

1. "Asceticism means: Do not become grief-stricken by anything which you lose, and do not rejoice and boast over what you acquire."

2. "If you can develop the ability of not allowing anything to make you heedless of Allāh *taʿālā*, you should most certainly do it."

Note: What excellent advice.

3. Muhammad ibn Yazīd says: "Hadrat Wuhayb took an oath that he will never laugh until the angels come to him at the time of his death and inform him of his position with Allāh *taʿālā*." The narrator says: "People saw dreams about him informing them that he is a dweller of Paradise." When people informed him of this, he would cry profusely and say: "I think this dream is from Satan."

4. He was asked: "Can a sinner get the enjoyment of worship?" He replied: "Never. Definitely not. Not even the person who intends to commit a sin."

Note: We make *duʿā'* to Allāh *taʿālā* to give us refuge from sins through His grace so that we can be filled with the enjoyment of worship.

5. He used to relate: Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* asked Allāh *taʿālā*: "O my Allāh! What is the sign of a servant being pleased with You?" Allāh *taʿālā* sent revelation to him saying: "When I give him

the *taufīq* (inspiration) to carry out acts of obedience and prevent him from disobedience, you must conclude that I am pleased with him."

6. "I prefer giving up backbiting (*ghībah*) to spending the entire world and whatever it contains in the path of Allāh *taʿālā*."

7. "I prefer lowering my gaze to spending the entire world and whatever it contains in the path of Allāh *taʿālā*." He then recited this verse:

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَغُضُّوْا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوْا فُرُوْجَهُمْ

"Say to the believing men: they must lower their gazes and safeguard their private parts." (Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 30)

8. "When Allāh *taʿālā* wills to bestow on His servant, he puts him through poverty, physical sicknesses, and fear. This continues until when his death approaches him while he has some sin in his record. As a result of this, severity is imposed on him at the time when his soul is taken out of him. Now when he meets Allāh *taʿālā*, he does not have any sin in his record."

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* – through His grace – treat all of us with pardon.

9. "Some *ʿulamā'* are referred to as jurists while they are included among the ignorant ones in Allāh's record." May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us from this.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What excellent statements. They are worthy of being inscribed in gold.

Demise

He passed away in 153 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 8, pp. 119-133)

Hadrat ʿAmr ibn Shurahbīl al-Hamdānī al-Kūfī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAmr and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Maysarah.

He is a reliable and just narrator of Hadīth, and a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī who is an ardent worshipper and ascetic.

Statements

1. When he used to lie down on his bed to rest at night, he would say: "If only my mother did not give birth to me." His wife said to him on one occasion: "Abū Maysarah! Has Allāh *taʿālā* not been kind to you? Did He not bless you with the wealth of Islam and bestowed every type of favour on you?" He replied: "You are certainly correct in whatever you said. However, Allāh *taʿālā* informed us that we will be brought before the Hell-fire. But He did not make it clear whether we will be taken away from it or not?"

He was making reference to this verse:

وَإِنْ مِّنْكُمْ إِلاَّ وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا

"There is not anyone among you who will not pass through it. This is a promise upon your Sustainer – inevitable, absolute." (Sūrah Maryam, 19: 71)

2. He relates: "A person passed away. When he was placed in his grave, the angels came to him and said: 'We have come from Allāh *taʿālā* to inflict 100 lashes on you.' He reminded them of his salāh, fasting and other efforts, so they reduced his punishment. He eventually agreed to receive ten lashes. He then cried before them and beseeched them to reduce it further. They said: 'It is necessary and unavoidable to give you at least one lash.' Subsequently, the angels gave him just one lash which caused his entire grave to be filled with flames and he became unconscious. When he came a little to his senses, he asked the angels: 'For which sin did you give me this one lash?' They replied: 'You had fallen asleep one day. When you got up, you performed salāh without performing *wudū'*. And you heard an oppressed person crying out for help but you did not help him.'"

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* give us refuge through His grace. O Allāh! Save us from the Hell-fire. (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 4, p. 120)

Demise

He passed away in 163 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, p. 422)

Hadrat Abū ʿAlī Shaqīq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Balkhī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Shaqīq, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Alī, and his father's name is Ibrāhīm.

Merits

He was from among the *mashā'ikh* of Khurāsān. He remained in the company of Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullāh* and adopted the Tarīqah from him. He is a teacher of Hātim Asamm *rahimahullāh*, and a student of Imām Zufar *rahimahullāh*. He used to accompany Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* to the assembly of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. He is a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Importance of this world and the Hereafter

He used to say: I pondered for twenty years until I was able to distinguish between this world and the Hereafter. I found them in two sentences, both of which are stated by Allāh *taʿālā*. The first [this world] is referred to as follows:

وَمَا أُوْتِيْتُمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا

"Whatever you have been given are mere possessions of this worldly life."

The second [the Hereafter] is referred to as follows:

وَمَا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ خَيْرٌ وَّأَبْقٰى

"Whatever is with Allāh is better and more enduring."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how he differentiated between this world and the Hereafter, and that too, in the light of the Qur'ān. This is a sign of his perfection in knowledge and cognition. May Allāh *taʿālā* also make our academic and practical temperament like this. Āmīn.

Statements

1. "Remain aloof from the wealthy people. The moment you become attached to them and start desiring their wealth, you will be leaving Allāh *taʿālā* aside and making them your god."

2. "The similitude of a believer is like a person who plants a date seed but he fears thorn trees spreading around this tree. The similitude of a hypocrite is like a person who plants thorn trees and hopes to obtain fresh and succulent dates from them."

3. "If an *ʿālim* becomes covetous and desirous of accumulating wealth, who will an ignorant person emulate? If a person is well-known as a Saint, and he too becomes desirous of the world, desires the enjoyment of weddings and clothing, who will the masses – who were already involved in all this – emulate in order to come out of all such activities? If the shepherds themselves become

wolves, who is going to tend to the sheep?" (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 65)

4. He used to say to Hātim Asamm *rahimahullāh*: "Have contact with people to the extent of the contact which you have with fire. Take benefit from the fire but remain on your guard so that you do not get burnt by it." (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 164)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how clearly he explained this subject through an example. Every person can fully understand it.

5. "*Tawakkul* (reliance and trust in Allāh *taʿālā*) means that you must experience absolute peace and comfort from the promises of Allāh *taʿālā*. In other words, you must have full assurance and conviction in Allāh's promises."

Demise

Some history books state that he was martyred in 174 A.H. in the district of Khatlān and was buried there. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 201)

Hadrat Ismā'īl ibn 'Ulayyah *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ismā'īl, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Bishr, his father's name is Ibrāhīm ibn Muqsim, and his mother's name was 'Ulayyah. She was a slave-woman of the Banū Shaybān tribe. But she was a very learned woman. He is attributed to her and known as Ismā'īl ibn 'Ulayyah. He was born in 110 A.H. in Basra.

Merits

Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* states: "Proficiency and discernment [in knowledge] end with Ibn 'Ulayyah in Basra." Hashīm says: "A few *huffāz* of Hadīth assembled in Basra on one occasion. The Muhaddithūn (erudite Hadīth scholars) of Kūfah said to them: "Bring anyone apart from Ismā'īl ibn 'Ulayyah, and you will not find us below them in knowledge and merits. But we cannot compete against the knowledge and merits of Ibn 'Ulayyah."

Imām Shu'bah used to refer to him as Sayyid al-Muhaddithīn (the chief of the Muhaddithūn). Yazīd ibn Hārūn used to say: "When I went to Basra, I did not meet a single person who was considered superior to Ibn 'Ulayyah in the field of Hadīth." Imām Yahyā ibn Ma'īn *rahimahullāh* said: "Ibn 'Ulayyah was a reliable, trustworthy, pious and dependable person."

Post of justice

He enjoyed many positions because of his juristical expertise and in-depth knowledge. He was first of all put in charge of the charities of Basra. Then he was given the responsibility of the military court in Baghdad. And lastly, he was appointed to the post of justice in Baghdad. But he did not remain in this post for very long. The moment he heard of the disapproval of Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh* in this regard, he handed in his resignation.

Worship and fear of Allāh *ta'ālā*

Ibn 'Ulayyah was completely enamoured with the recitation of the Qur'ān and worship. Ibn Madīnī *rahimahullāh* spent a night with him and saw him reading one third of the Qur'ān in that night.

Asceticism, piety and consciousness of the Hereafter were general qualities of that era. Ibn 'Ulayyah *rahimahullāh* held a laudable position among the Taba' Tābi'in in these qualities. Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mubārak's *rahimahullāh* inclination towards him and then helping him are clear proofs of this. His handing his resignation after Ibn Mubārak's disapproval is proof of the extent of his piety.

Ibn 'Ulayyah *rahimahullāh* was undoubtedly a physical manifestation of:

فَلْيَضْحَكُوْا قَلِيْلًا وَلْيَبْكُوْا كَثِيْرًا

"So let them laugh little, and cry a lot."

His fear of Allāh *taʿālā* was of such a level that he never laughed for many years. His students relate that ever since he was made the governor of Basra, he was never seen to be laughing.

Demise

This lamp of knowledge and practice was extinguished on Thursday, 24th or 25th Dhū al-Qaʿdah 193 A.H. His *janāzah salāh* was performed by his son Ibrāhīm, and he was buried in the famous Ibn Mālik graveyard of Baghdad. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9 – *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, p. 91)

Hadrat Hafs ibn Ghiyāth *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Hafs, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿUmar. Nakhaʿ was a branch of the famous Yemeni tribe, Midh-haj. This branch settled down in Kūfah. Based on his affiliation with this branch, he is known as Nakhaʿī. He was born in 117 A.H. and is a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Post of justice

The most glorious pages of his life were with regard to his services in the field of the judiciary and issuing *fatāwā*. He embellished Kūfah and Baghdad for many years in these posts. Separate judges had always been appointed for the eastern and western districts of Baghdad. Hārūn ar-Rashīd first appointed him to the post of justice for eastern Baghdad. He was 60 years old at the time. He maintained this post with full authority and influence for two years. This was followed by his appointment as a judge in Kūfah.

Extreme caution

He was extremely cautious and very particular about earning *halāl*. While he was a judge, he fell ill and could not carry out his judicial duties for fifteen days. When he recovered, he returned 100 dirhams to the assessor with the following message:

> "This is the amount for the fifteen days in which I could not pass any judgement on the

cases of the Muslims. I do not have any right to take this amount."

Note: Glory to Allāh! This was his purity in transactions – something which is essential on every Muslim. This is especially necessary for the *'ulamā'* and *mashā'ikh* so that they can be emulated.

Demise

He passed away on 10 Dhū al-Hijjah 194 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9 – *Taba' Tābi'īn*, vol. 2, p. 122)

Hadrat Hammād ibn Salamah *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Hammād and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Salamah. He was a slave of the Banū Tamīm. He is listed among the distinguished Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn.

Asceticism and worship

Together with knowledge and acumen, the Tābiʿīn and Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn distinguished themselves by possessing asceticism, piety, worship and spiritual striving similar to that of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. Hammād ibn Salamah *rahimahullāh* was also renowned for these angelic qualities among his contemporaries.

Shihāb ibn Maʿmar says: "He was an *abdāl* of his time." Ibn Hibbān says: "He is listed among the ardent worshippers whose *duʿā's* used to be readily accepted." He was well-known for his acumen, merits, religiosity and worship among the people of his time. He adhered strictly to the Sunnah, and was fully engaged in trying to put an end to the influences of the Ahl-e-Bidʿah (those who commit acts of innovation in Islam).

Hadrat Hammād ibn Salamah *rahimahullāh* said: "The person who acquires Hadīth for any purpose other than Allāh *taʿālā* (i.e. he acquires it for honour and fame) is trying to deceive Allāh *taʿālā*."

Value for time

Mūsā ibn Ismāʿīl addressed his students saying: "If I were to say that I never saw Hammād ibn Salamah laughing, I would be speaking the truth. He used to remain engrossed in his work all the time. He would be occupied in the recitation of the Qur'ān or different forms of *dhikr*. Alternatively, he would be busy in salāh. He had divided his entire day for these acts."

Muqātil ibn Sālih al-Khurāsānī *rahimahullāh* relates that he was with Hadrat Hammād ibn Salamah *rahimahullāh* one day. Someone knocked on the door, so he said to his slave-girl: "O daughter, go see who is at the door." She returned and said: "It is the messenger of Muhammad ibn Sulaymān (who was most probably the governor of Basra)." He said: "Tell him to come in alone." The messenger entered and gave him a letter which read as follows:

> "In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. This letter is from Muhammad ibn Sulaymān to Hammād ibn Salamah.
>
> May Allāh *taʿālā* protect you as He protected His *auliyā'* and obedient servants. A matter has cropped up, if you could come to me, I will be able to benefit from your counsel with regard to it. Was salām."

After reading the letter, he asked his slave-girl to bring his pen and ink-pot, and to write the following reply on the back of his letter:

> "May Allāh *taʿālā* also protect you as He protects His friends and obedient servants. I remained in the company of many *ʿulamā'* who would not go to anyone. I also excuse my self from coming to you. If you need to understand any matter, you must come to me, and ask whatever you wish. If you decide to come, you must come alone. You must not be accompanied by your servants and other notables. If not, I will not be able to see to your well-being or to my own well-being. Was salām."

The messenger took the reply and went back. The narrator says:

We were still seated when someone knocked on the door. The slave-girl was asked to see who was there. She returned and said: "It is Muhammad ibn Sulaymān." He said: "Tell him he may enter, but he must come alone." He entered, offered *salām*, and sat down. After a short while, Muhammad ibn Sulaymān said: "How is it that whenever I sit before you, I am overcome with fear and apprehension?" Hammād ibn Salamah related on the authority of Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "When an *ʿālim* seeks the pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā* through his *Dīn*, then everything begins to fear him. But when he seeks the treasures of the world from Him, he begins to fear everything."

Muhammad ibn Sulaymān listened to all this with an attentive ear, and said: "I am presenting these 40 000 dirhams to you, you may spend this money for your needs." Hammād ibn Salamah said with total independence: "Take it back and return it to those from whom you took it wrongfully." He said: "By Allāh, I am giving you this money from my family inheritance." Hammād said: "I have no need for it. Excuse me. May Allāh *taʿālā* pardon you. Take this money and distribute it." He said: "If any deserving person does not receive it in the course of my distributing it, he will complain of injustice." He said again: "Please excuse me [from accepting it]."

Note: This lengthy incident displays a splendid and brilliant picture of Hammād's life. It provides us with practical guidelines for abstention, contentment and independence. This is sufficient for our admonition.

Demise

He passed away in 167 A.H. in Basra and was buried there. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* narrates that Hammād *rahimahullāh* passed away in Dhū al-Hijjah, and he was 80 years old at the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 2, p. 134)

Hadrat Hamzah ibn Habīb Zayyāt *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name was Hamzah and his *kunnīyyat* was Abū ʿAmārah. His father's name was Habīb and grandfather's name was ʿAmārah. Zayyāt was his title. He was born in 80 A.H. His paternal home was in Kūfah and he spent his entire life there, conducting lessons and benefiting people in general. He is a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Merits

He was proficient in the Qur'ān, Hadīth, literature, inheritance and other sciences. The *ʿulamā'* are especially unanimous about his knowledge of the Qur'ān and fine understanding of the laws of inheritance. Hamzah ibn Zayyāt holds a distinguished position among the seven imāms of *qirā'ah* who were renowned in this field and who were emulated later on. After ʿĀsim *rahimahullāh* and Aʿmash *rahimahullāh*, Hammād acquired the position of leadership in the field of *qirā'ah* in Kūfah.

Worship

He was a towering example from the righteous (*sulahā'*) of this *ummah* in his abundant worship and spiritual exercises. He used to spend a major portion of the night in worship, and pass very little time in sleeping. Imām Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh* and Sharīk ibn ʿAbdillāh

ra<u>h</u>imahullāh both have the honour of being his students. They relate: "Whenever anyone saw Ibn <u>H</u>abīb az-Zayyāt, he was either delivering his lessons or performing <u>s</u>alāh. He had the habit of performing four *rakʿat*s of optional <u>s</u>alāh at the end of every lesson. He used to complete at least twenty five recitations of the Qur'ān every month." Ibn Fa<u>d</u>l *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* said: "Calamities were driven away from Kūfah by virtue of <u>H</u>amzah's piety, great knowledge and abundant worship." (*Mīzān al-Iʿtidāl*, vol. 1, p. 284)

He could not tolerate accepting any service from anyone. If he felt thirsty in the course of delivering his lessons during the intense summer season, he would not ask any of his students to bring water for him. He would get up himself and quench his thirst.

He did not accept any wage his entire life for teaching the Qur'ān. He had made trade and business his means of income. He used to take olives from Kūfah and sell them in <u>H</u>alwān. He would purchase cheese and walnuts from <u>H</u>alwān and sell them in Kūfah. But he confined this occupation to absolute necessity – earning an amount which was just enough for his survival. Most of his time was spent in teaching and worship.

<u>Note</u>: Glory to Allāh! This shows that it is not reprehensible for an *ʿālim* to engage in business. Rather, it is commendable provided there are no excesses in it and the person practises on the

Hadīth instruction: “Do good in your quest [for sustenance].”

It must be done in this way so that it does not interfere with a person’s other academic and *Dīnī* activities.

Demise

He passed away in Halwān either in 106 A.H. or 107 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 2, p. 144)

Hadrat Sa'īd ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Sa'īd, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad or Abū 'Abd al-'Azīz. He was born in 90 A.H. and is a Taba' Tābi'ī.

Merits

He was a high ranking jurist and Muhaddith of Shām. He had the good fortune of studying under senior Tābi'īn. He combined the sciences of Qur'ān, Hadīth, Fiqh and other subjects. His worship, spiritual exercises, fear and submission before Allāh *ta'ālā* are the glorious pages from the book of his life.

Hākim says: "As regards his deep understanding of Islam, piety, knowledge and acumen, Sa'īd ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz enjoyed the same position in Shām as enjoyed by Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* among the people of Madīnah." Imām Auzā'ī *rahimahullāh* was a famous scholar of his time in the fields of *fiqh* and *iftā'* (issuing *fatāwā*). If anyone were to ask him a question in the presence of Ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, he would immediately say:

سَلُوْا أَبَا مُحَمَّد

"Ask Abū Muhammad."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the humility and selflessness of our elders. One acknowledges the intellect and acumen of the other without any hesitation. This is an excellent example for us. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to practise. Āmīn.

Fear of Allāh *taʿālā*

His knowledge was complemented by his deeds and actions. He used to engage in a lot of worship, and was always trembling out of fear of Allāh *taʿālā*. He would spend the entire night in salāh and his eyes would flow with tears continuously. Abū al-Farā al-Farābīsī *rahimahullāh* relates his personal experience: "I saw him performing salāh on one occasion. Tears were flowing continuously from his eyes and falling on the straw mat." Muhammad ibn Mubārak as-Surī *rahimahullāh* relates: "Whenever Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz missed a salāh with congregation, he would cry uncontrollably." (*Tadhkiratul Huffāz*, vol. 1, p. 198)

He said:

مَا قُمْتُ إِلَى صَلَوةٍ إِلَّا مُثِّلَتْ لِيْ جَهَنَّمُ

"Whenever I stand up for salāh, the Hell-fire in its original form presents itself before me."

Statements

Some of his statements are quoted in the books of *Tabaqāt*. One can gauge from these statements that together with being a high ranking *ʿālim*,

jurist and *muhaddith*, he was a close servant of Allāh *taʿālā*. Whenever anyone asked him for a *fatwā*, he would first say these words:

لاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللهِ، هٰذَا رَأْيِيْ وَالرَّأْيُ يُخْطِيْ وَيُصِيْبُ

"All power and might belongs to Allāh taʿālā alone. This is my opinion, and an opinion can be right or wrong."

Demise

He passed away in Damascus in 167 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 2, p. 176)

Hadrat Shurayk ibn ʿAbdillāh Nakhaʿī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name was Shurayk and his *kunnīyyat* was Abū ʿAbdillāh. He was born in, Bukhārā, the well-known and populous city of Khurāsān in 95 A.H.

High position

Qādī Shurayk inherited virtue and merits from his family. His expertise in the fields of Fiqh and Hadīth was accepted. He is a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Post of justice

Because of his expertise and deep knowledge in the fields of jurisprudence and issuing *fatāwā*, many rulers appointed him to the coveted position of judge. Consequently, he was a judge over different periods in the cities of Kūfah, Wāsit and Ahwāz.

A noteworthy practice

The following was his habit during his entire tenure as a judge: He would have lunch before the court commenced, remove a piece of paper from his socks, and look at it with concentration. He would then pass judgement on the different cases which were presented to him. Some of his friends wanted to find out what was really on that paper which caused him to look at it so precisely every day. When they eventually got to see it, the following was written on it:

يَا شُرَيْكَ بْنَ عَبْدِ اللهِ، اُذْكُرِ الصِّرَاطَ وَحِدَّتَهُ، يَا شُرَيْكَ بْنَ عَبْدِ اللهِ، اُذْكُرِ الْمَوْقَفَ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

"O Shurayk ibn ʿAbdillāh! Think of the Sirāṯ (the bridge over Hell) and how fine and sharp it is. O Shurayk ibn ʿAbdillāh! Think of the time when you will be standing before Allāh taʿālā."

This in essence was a promissory note before Allāh *taʿālā* that during every procedure in court, conviction about the greatness of Allāh *taʿālā* must be present in the depths of his heart, and he must not commit any error or excess.

Statements

1. He used to say:

ترك الجواب في موضعه إذابة القلب

"Abstaining from giving an answer at the time when it is required is a proof of the numbness of the heart."

2. "Hunger sucks away illness."

Note: In other words, hunger provides relief to an illness.

Demise

He passed away in Kūfah on the 1st of Dhū al-Qaʿdah 177 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Saḥābah*, vol. 9, *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 2, p. 187)

Hadrat ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Qāsim *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān and his *kunnīyyat* is ʿAbdullāh. He was a resident of Egypt. There are many differences about the year of his birth. The years 128 A.H., 131 A.H. and 132 A.H. are mentioned.

Acumen and comprehensiveness

As regards his merits and acumen, he was a unique jurist and *hāfiz* of Hadīth. There are few personalities among the Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn who possessed so many diverse excellences. This was especially with regard to the Mālikī jurisprudence. It is difficult to find anyone equal to him in this field. His lengthy companionship with Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* made him a fountain in Mālikī jurisprudence. The first codification of the Mālikī *madh-hab* was initiated by him. He had about 300 volumes of *fatāwā* and *masā'il* of Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*. (*Tahdhīb at-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, p.253)

Narration of Muwattā Imām Mālik

The *Muwattā* of Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* has been transmitted through thirty chains of transmission, but only sixteen narrations are well-known and reliable. ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Qāsim is one of these sixteen.

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Statements

Many of his statements are worthy of being written in gold.

1. He used to make the following *duʿā'* very often: "O Allāh! Keep the world away from me, and me away from the world."

2. "There is no good in getting close to the rulers."

3. "Abstain from befriending too many people because this is equal to turning free people into slaves."

Demise

He passed away on 8th Safar on the night of Friday in Egypt. His grave is situated outside Bāb al-Qurāfah as-Sughrā. At the time of his death, he was either 58, 60 or 63 years old. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 2, p. 207)

ʿAllāmah Ibn Hajar ʿAsqalānī *rahimahullāh* states that he passed away in 191 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taqrīb*, p. 595)

Hadrat Imām Zufar *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name was Zufar and his *kunnīyyat* was Abū al-Hudhayl. His paternal home was in Basra. His father was a governor of Isbahān during the Umawī caliphate, and he was born here in 110 A.H. His lineage eventually goes up to ʿAdnān.

Character and habits

He distinguished himself among his contemporaries on the basis of his asceticism, piety, mannerisms and character. When he passed away, people in general felt that he died solely because of his fear for the Hereafter. Whereas his life was spotless. He himself used to say: "I have not left behind anything whose investigation I fear."

Ibrāhīm ibn Sulaymān says: "When we used to sit in the company of Imām Zufar, no one had the courage to speak about any worldly matters. If a person were to merely start a worldly subject, Imām Zufar would get up and leave."

Dā'ūd Tā'ī *rahimahullāh* was a famous ascetic and pious personality from among the students of Hadrat Imām Aʿzam Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. Dā'ūd Tā'ī *rahimahullāh* had a very brotherly and affectionate relationship with Imām Zufar *rahimahullāh*. Hasan ibn Ziyād says: "Dā'ūd Tā'ī occupied himself in worship alone, while Imām

Zufar *rahimahullāh* combined knowledge with worship."

Yahyā ibn Aktham says: "After the demise of Hadrat Imām A'zam Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*, my father preferred attending the assemblies of Imām Zufar *rahimahullāh* because together with possessing knowledge, he was a man of asceticism and piety."

Imām Zufar *rahimahullāh* said: "I never desired remaining in this world, nor did my heart ever become inclined to the attractions and beauty of this world."

Knowledge and merits

The *'ulamā'* are fully aware of the high position which he holds as regards his knowledge and merits. Furthermore, he has the honour of being a Taba' Tābi'ī.

The opinions of the imāms of Fiqh with regard to Imām Zufar *rahimahullāh*

Hadrat Imām Zufar *rahimahullāh* held a distinguished position among the students of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* for several reasons. One of them was the fact that Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* permitted him to conduct his own lessons while Imām Sāhib was still alive. Whereas, Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* and Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* did not receive such a permission.

Hadrat Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* said in an assembly:

هو إمام من أئمة المسلمين، وعلم من أعلام الدين

"He is one of the imāms of the Muslims, and one of the signs of the loftiness of Dīn."

Demise

He passed away at the young age of 48 in 158 A.H. Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* was present at the time of his death. He expressed his final request by saying: "These goods belong to my wife. These 3 000 dirhams are for my nephew." He added: "I do not owe anything to anyone, nor do I have any claim over anyone." This shows that he had no children. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 8, p. 212)

Hadrat Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name was Yaʿqūb and his *kunnīyyat* was Abū Yūsuf. His lineage goes up to the Ansār. He was born in 113 A.H. or 93 A.H. in Kūfah. His father, Ibrāhīm, was a poor man who used to earn a living by doing menial jobs in Kūfah.

Beginning of his education

He was enthusiastic about reading and writing from an early age. However, because of his poverty, his father wanted him to help him in earning a living. This is why he did not get an opportunity to undertake formal studies for many days. But his desire for knowledge prodded him forward to such an extent, that despite his poverty and dire circumstances, he began going to the *ʿulamā'* of Kūfah without his father knowing about it. There were many assemblies of *fiqh* and Hadīth in those days in Kūfah. The assemblies of Muhammad ibn Abī Laylā *rahimahullāh* and Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* enjoyed a special distinction at the time.

Consequently, Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* began attending the assemblies of Ibn Abū Laylā *rahimahullāh* for about 8-9 years. He then began attending the lessons of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. He was so attracted to his assembly that he never left it for as long as Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* was alive. He is a

specialist in the fields of *fiqh* and *fatāwā*, and a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

The post of chief justice

During the caliphate of Mahdī, Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* was appointed as a judge for the eastern section of Baghdad. He retained this post during the era of the caliph Hādī. When the reins of caliphate went into the hands of Hārūn ar-Rashīd, he maintained him in the same post for one year, and then appointed him as chief justice of all the occupied regions. Maqrīzī writes that no one in Iraq, Khurāsān, Shām and Egypt could be appointed to the post of judge without his order. (Maqrīzī, vol. 4, p. 181)

Statements

Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* made many wise statements. We are quoting some of them:

1. He used to say to his students: "O people! Seek knowledge solely for Allāh's pleasure. Do not allow any other purpose to be included in it. My personal condition was that when I sat in an assembly with humility, I got up from it with honour. And if a sat in an assembly while feeling proud and haughty about my knowledge, it resulted in my humiliation and disgrace. So beware! Seek knowledge solely for Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What excellent advice for students. If we practise on their words of advice, we will be their *muqallids* (followers) in the true

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sense of the word, and we will be bestowed with honour and respect.

2. "Abstain from the companionship of the person who does not fear the disgrace and humiliation of the Resurrection."

Note: Obviously, if a person does not fear humiliation before Allāh *taʿālā*, he will not bother if he disobeys Him. This will result in Allāh's displeasure against him. In such a case, he will have to suffer humiliation; there is no question of honour for him. And honour lies with Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

3. "There are three fundamental favours: (1) Islam. No favour of this world can be complete without it. (2) Health. No rest can be enjoyed without it. (3) Freedom from worry. Life cannot be peaceful without it."

Note: We have to be most grateful for these bounties. Together with valuing them, it is essential for us to be concerned about fulfilling the rights of these favours. If not, these favours can become causes of our humiliation and downfall. A Hadīth states:

قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ نِعْمَتَانِ مَغْبُوْنٌ فِيْهِمَا كَثِيْرٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ، الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "There are two favours regarding which many people are deceived, viz. health and free time."

Excellent character

The mannerisms and character which he displayed while in the position of chief justice were really his peculiarity. Many pure souls become tainted and soiled when they reach such high positions. But Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* never allowed himself to become soiled. Intermingling with people, humility, submission, helping and assisting people, according respect to the *'ulamā'*, generosity and big-heartedness were qualities which remained with him just as a shadow remains with a person.

When he was appointed as the chief judge, he used to receive a monthly salary of more than 2 000 dirhams. In addition to this, he would receive hundreds of thousands of dirhams annually from the court of Hārūn ar-Rashīd. In this way, he had a considerable amount of wealth at the time of his death. But when he was about to depart from this world, he made a bequest for its entire distribution to the poor. Approximately 400 000 dirhams were distributed among the people of Makkah, Madīnah, Kūfah and Baghdad.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the extent of his generosity. Those who are his *muqallids* (followers) should at least have one percent of it, if not, their *taqlīd* of him will be of no consequence.

He used to say: "Knowledge is such a thing that only if you give it all your life, it will give you a portion of itself. But when you receive a part of it,

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do not sit back. Instead, continue striving to acquire more."

Note: This is an excellent advice for the *ʿulamāʾ*. No matter what level of knowledge a person reaches, he must never consider himself not in need of any more. Allāh *taʿālā* instructed Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to make *duʿāʾ* for more knowledge. Allāh *taʿālā* says in the Qurʾān: "Say: O my Sustainer! Increase me in knowledge."

He used to say: "For people of the government to live in a distressed and afflicted state is a cause of their degradation. And for judges and *ʿulamāʾ* to live a life of simplicity is a source of honour and pride."

Illness

He was overcome by a unique softness of heart during his illness. The integrity with which he fulfilled the responsibilities of the judiciary were described previously. Despite this, he said this during his final moments: "I wish I left this world in a state of poverty and need. I wish I had not accepted the post of chief justice. But I still thank Allāh *taʿālā* because I did not intentionally wrong any person, did not take sides with any party, nor did I wish for a particular party to succeed and the other to fail."

A strange condition overcame him on the day when he departed from this world. These words were on his lips: "O Allāh! You know fully well

that I did not resort to my own opinion when passing judgement between two people. Nor did I pass a judgement which was against the actual facts. I always endeavoured to pass a judgement in the light of the Qur'ān and Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Whenever I experienced any difficulty, I would make Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* a means between myself and You. As far as I know, Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* was most knowledgeable on the laws and rules. He never went out of the limits of the truth wittingly."

He also said: "O Allāh! You know fully well that I always remained pure, and I never consumed a single *harām* dirham wittingly."

Demise

He passed away on a Thursday at the time of *zuhr* on 5 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 182 A.H. The caliph, Hārūn ar-Rashīd, led the people in the *janāzah salāh*, and had him buried in the special graveyard of his family. Hārūn ar-Rashīd announced on the occasion of his death: "His death does not affect just one person or one family, but the entire *ummah*." May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 8, p. 49)

Hadrat Imām Muhammad Shaybānī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Hasan, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū 'Abdillāh. His father was a resident of Qarastān, a district in Damascus, but came to Iraq for work and settled down there. Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* was born here in 132 A.H.

Education and training

He spent a few years in Wāsit when his father joined the Syrian army, went to Kūfah, and settled down there. At that time, Kūfah was a centre of knowledge, sciences, *'ulamā'* and *mashā'ikh*. On the academic level, it had acquired the status of Umm al-Bilād (mother of all cities) among the Islamic lands. The commencement of Imām Muhammad's *rahimahullāh* education and training took place in this academic environment, and he came to be recognized for his knowledge and acumen, and as a Taba' Tābi'ī.

First of all, he acquired knowledge of the Qur'ān and then proceeded to study language and literature. After completing his primary education, he began attending the lessons of the senior and renowned scholars of Kūfah. His natural capabilities and aptitude, plus the academic environment of Kūfah made him into a worthy jewel while he was still a young man.

Attending the lessons of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*

He was only fourteen years old when he went to Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* to ask him a certain ruling (*mas'alah*). The *mas'alah* was: If a person who is not *bāligh* (has not reached the age of maturity) sleeps away after performing the *'ishā salāh*, and he becomes *bāligh* that very night, will he have to repeat the *'ishā salāh*? Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* replied in the affirmative. Since Imām Muhammad had asked this question about himself, he got up from there immediately, performed *wudū'*, went to one corner of the musjid, and repeated his *'ishā salāh*. On seeing this, Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said: "Inshā Allāh, this youngster will be rightly guided."

Although this incident may seem insignificant, it became the means for his studying *fiqh*, having confidence in Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*, and studying under him. A few days later, he came to Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and expressed his desire to study under him.

Imām Sāhib's *rahimahullāh* prerequisite for admission into his class was that the student must memorize the Qur'ān. The same condition was made to Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh*. He returned after one week with his father and said: "I have memorized the Qur'ān."

He then asked a certain ruling to Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, who asked him: "Are you asking this question from your own side, or did you overhear it from someone?" Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* replied: "It came on its own into my mind." Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said: "You have posed a question which is normally posed by adults. You must continue attending my classes." Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* then joined his classes permanently and remained in his company all the time – whether at home or on a journey. He did not attend the lessons of anyone else for as long as Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was alive.

Studying under Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh*

He had the opportunity of studying for just four years under Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. This short period was insufficient for an intricate and vast science like *fiqh*. This is why he turned to Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* after the demise of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. He attended his classes, completed his studies in *fiqh*, and was rarely separated from him except in the last few years.

Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* was senior to him in knowledge and age. Despite this, he was most considerate of him. It was Imām Muhammad's practice to go very early in the morning to the Hadīth lessons of other scholars, and by the time he went to Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh*, many *masā'il* were already discussed and explained.

But when Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* entered, Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* would repeat them all for him.

Study of Hadīth

In addition to *fiqh* and Qur'ān, the companionship of Imām Abū Hanīfah and Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahumullāh* had instilled in him the desire for Hadīth. But the lessons of these two personalities were essentially lessons of *fiqh* and Qur'ān. This is why he needed to go to a teacher who was occupied solely in Hadīth. For this purpose, he headed for Madīnah Munawwarah, presented himself before Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*, and studied Hadīth under him. (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 160)

Imām Muhammad's *rahimahullāh* vigilance

Muhammad ibn Maslamah *rahimahullāh* writes: "Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* divided the night into three parts: one part for sleep, the second part for salāh, and the third part for knowledge. He used to sleep very little. Someone asked him: "Why do you not sleep?" He replied: "How can I sleep when others have placed their reliance on me and went to sleep? They say: 'If they encounter any *mas'alah*, they will take it to him [referring to himself], and he will solve it for them. So if we sleep, the *Dīn* will be lost."

He started conducting lessons in the musjid of Kūfah when he was just twenty years old. He was very sharp, intelligent and bright. He used to

recite the Qur'ān in abundance – he used to recite ten *pārās* daily during the day.[1]

Character and habits

The essential criterion for man's honour is his character. If there is any weakness in his in this regard, then even if he is an extraordinary person, he is considered to be ordinary. If he possesses any merit in this regard, then no matter how low he may be in our eyes, he has acquired true honour. Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* distinguished himself from his contemporaries by virtue of his merits and brilliance. He was a very honourable, cultured man of exceptional mannerisms. He never hurt anyone verbally, and treated everyone with love and affection.

Forbearance

He was an embodiment of forbearance. Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* said with regard to Imām Muhammad: "I have not seen a forbearing person like him." He would hear things which were against his temperament, but he would tolerate them. Students would ask him all types of questions and engage him in discussions, yet, a single frown will not be seen on his forehead. Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* says: "Imām Muhammad was the only person whom I saw who

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[1] Habībullāh Mukhtār: *Muqaddamah al-Mukhtār Sharh Kitāb al-Āthār*, Karachi.

would not frown and scowl in the course of discussions and debates."

Generosity

He was very generous and open-hearted. Whatever he received from his father was all spent for his own education. His generosity used to be more manifest when he showed kindness to students. He helped Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* and Asad ibn Furāt *rahimahullāh* with 80 dirhams each on several occasions. At times, he would have nothing, but would fulfil the needs of the poor through others.

Asceticism and worship

He was a righteous person, an ardent worshipper, and one who spent the night in worship. Shaykh ʿAbdullāh narrates from his father who said: "I tried on several occasions to perform just one salāh with the humility and submission with which Imām Muhammad performs his salāh. But I failed." Bakr ibn Muhammad narrates that Muhammad ibn Samāʿah and ʿĪsā ibn Abān *rahimahumullāh* (who were shaykhs and *muhaddithūn*) of their time said that they learnt to perform salāh in a beautiful and excellent manner from Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh*.

Note: This shows that the senior *muhaddithūn* and *fuqahā'* (jurists) used to learn and teach the method of performing salāh. Unfortunately, let alone not having internal humility and submission, no importance is given to fulfilling

the outward salāh in accordance with the Sunnah. O Allāh! Enable me, all my physical and spiritual children, and all the Muslims to give importance to this. Āmīn.

Fear of the Hereafter

He was very soft-hearted and he would tremble out of fear for the Hereafter. Some time before his death, he was overcome by profuse crying. When people asked him the reason, he replied: "When I will be made to stand before Allāh *taʿālā* and I am asked: 'What brought you to Rayy (name of a place), was it to seek Allāh's pleasure or to wage jihād in Allāh's cause?', then what answer will I give?"

Note: This shows that the pious elders did not like leaving their homes unless it was for a noble purpose. It was because of his employment as a judge that Imām Muhammad had to accompany Hārūn ar-Rashīd to Rayy. But his heart did not really want to go. This is why he was overcome by profuse crying at the time of his death.

Knowledge and acumen

His knowledge and acumen can only be gauged from studying his books. But everyone does not have the opportunity to study them. We are therefore quoting – in brief – what others said in this regard.

Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* says: "Had I not been blessed with the companionship of Imām

Muhammad *rahimahullāh*, the door of knowledge would not have opened to me. When he used to explain a *mas'alah*, the eloquence of his language would make one think that the Qur'ān was revealed in his language." He used to say: "I acquired knowledge equal to the weight of one camel from him."

Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* was asked: "Where did you learn these intricate *masā'il*?" He replied: "From the books of Muhammad ibn Hasan."

Fiqh

Imām Muhammad's popularity and the actual reason for his honour and distinction is his expertise in *fiqh*. Other scholars were consulted for other sciences, but when it came to the world of *fiqh*, he alone was its king. Imām Shāfi'ī *rahimahullāh* studied *fiqh* under him and became a *faqīh* (jurist). Asad ibn Furāt *rahimahullāh,* a student of Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*, was the one who laid the foundations of Mālikī jurisprudence. He [Asad ibn Furāt] had studied under Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh.*

Hadīth

Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* studied under all the prominent Hadīth scholars of his time. He was an excellent memorizer of the Ahādīth of Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh.* His fine insight and vast knowledge in this field can be gauged from his writings on this subject.

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Ijtihād and extracting rulings

It is more difficult to make ijtihād (independent ruling) and extract rulings directly from the Qur'ān and Hadīth than to discuss secondary issues. Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* was on the level of a *mujtahid* in extracting and deriving *masā'il*. The conditions and prerequisites laid down by the jurists for the validity of *ijtihād* and extracting rulings are all fulfilled by him. Despite this, he did not initiate his own *madh-hab*. He always considered himself to be a follower of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*.

Demise

Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* passed away in Rayy in 189 A.H. when he was 58 years old. This great imām of *fiqh* was buried in Jabal Tabruk, a famous fort in Rayy. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taba' Tābi'īn*, p. 157)

Hadrat Sayyidunā Mūsā al-Kāzim ibn Jaʿfar as-Sādiq *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Mūsā, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan, and Kāzim is his title. He is the son of Hadrat Jaʿfar as-Sādiq *rahimahullāh*. He was from among the distinguished and renowned *mashā'ikh* and *ʿulamā'* of his time. He is listed among the Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn.

Birth

He was born in Abwā', a famous village near Madīnah, in the year 128 A.H. He lived in Madīnah for the rest of his life.

Merits

Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes:

كان صالحا عابدا جوّادا حليما كبير القَدر

"He was a righteous person, an ardent worshipper, generous, forbearing, and of high rank."

He paid particular attention to worship and spiritual exercises. His excessive worship caused him to be known as the greatest worshipper of his time.

Hāfiz Ibn Jauzī *rahimahullāh* provides an excellent biography of him in his book, *Sifatus Safwah*. ʿAllāmah Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* writes:

كان كثير العبادة

"He used to worship excessively."

Hārūn ar-Rashīd imprisoned him on the suspicion that people were pledging *bayʿah* to him. Despite this, his spiritual exercises and practices of the day and night were not affected in the least. An eye witness to his worship in the prison describes it as follows:

"After performing the *ʿishā salāh*, he would remain engaged in the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*, concern for the Hereafter, and praise of Allāh *taʿālā*. When a considerable part of the night passed, he would stand up and perform salāh until the morning. After performing the *fajr salāh*, he would engage in a little *dhikr* until sunrise. He would then remain in *murāqabah* (self introspection) for quite some time. He would make *miswāk*, eat some food, and rest until before mid-day. After mid-day, he would perform *wudū'* and remain in salāh from *zuhr* until *ʿasr salāh*. After the *ʿasr salāh*, he will turn towards the *qiblah* and remain in the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*. He would continue until *maghrib*. After the *maghrib salāh*, he would occupy himself in optional salāh until *ʿishā*. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, p. 359)

Note: The abundant worship of Hadrat Mūsā Kāzim *rahimahullāh* is an example for all of us. As far as possible, we must spend this temporary abode in the worship of Allāh *taʿālā*, *dhikr*,

recitation of the Qur'ān, *duʿā'*, beseeching Allāh *taʿālā*, introspection, self-assessment, and other good deeds. If we do this, we will be able to enjoy the eternal bounties of the Hereafter.

والله الموفِّق وهو يهدي السبيل

"Inspiration is from Allāh taʿālā alone, and He alone guides to the straight path."

Generosity

Hadrat Mūsā Kāzim *rahimahullāh* held a distinguished position in generosity. Khayr ad-Dīn Zarkalī *rahimahullāh* writes:

كان أحد كبار العلماء الأجواد

"He was one of those senior ʿulamā' who were very generous."

Imām Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes:

كان موسى من أجود الحكماء

"Mūsā was one of the most generous wise men."

Frankness

While he was in prison, he wrote a letter to the caliph. This letter is a clear reflection of his frankness, bravery and truthfulness. The following was written in his letter:

أما بعد! يا أمير المؤمنين انه لم ينقص عني يوم من البلاء إلاّ انقضى عنك يوم من الرخاء حتى يفضي بنا ذالك إلى يوم يخسر فيه المبطلون.

"O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! Just as my days of trial and tribulation are passing, the days of your comfort and luxury are decreasing. Eventually we will both have to experience a day in which those who did evil will suffer loss."

Demise

After illuminating the world of knowledge and practice for many years, this brilliant lamp was extinguished on 25 Rajab 183 A.H. Most *'ulamā'* are of the opinion that he passed away in the prison of Baghdad. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. Even to this day, his grave is well-known in Baghdad and visited by many people from around the world. May Allāh *ta'ālā* illuminate his grave. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, p. 363)

Hadrat Abū Is-hāq Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his father's name is Ad-ham, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Is-hāq. 'Allāmah Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* refers to him as an ascetic and very truthful Taba' Tābi'ī.

Merits

Yūnus ibn Sulaymān Balkhī *rahimahullāh* says: "Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullāh* was from among the noblemen of Balkh. His father was a very wealthy man with many attendants and servants working for him. Ibrāhīm went hunting with his slaves and servants. He was spurring his horse forward when he heard a voice from above saying: "O Ibrāhīm! What is this futile activity?!"

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَّأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لاَ تُرْجَعُوْنَ

"Do you think We created you in vain and that you will not be returned to Us!?"

"Fear Allāh! It is essential for you to make preparations for the day of Resurrection."

On hearing this, he got off his horse, discarded this world, and became occupied in deeds of the Hereafter.

He left Balkh and came to Makkah where he remained in the company of Fudayl ibn 'Iyād

rahimahullāh and Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh*. He then proceeded to Shām.

Ibn Bashār says: "I was with Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham on the journey. He said to me: 'If the kings and their children only knew what joy and bounties we are experiencing, they will fight us with swords for their entire lives just to acquire it from us.' I said: 'O Abū Is-hāq! People have made rest and comforts their objectives. As a result, they have strayed from the straight path.' He smiled and said: 'Where did you learn this from!?'"

Note: Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to relate the above incident to us and say: "But this treasure cannot be obtained through swords. We will have to obliterate ourselves for it and remain in the company of the pious. Only then will we be able to acquire it."

Abundant worship

Bashīr ibn Mundhir *rahimahullāh* relates: "When I used to look at Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham, he appeared to be lifeless. If a slight breeze were to merely touch him, he would fall. The complexion of his face had changed because of excessive worship and spiritual exercises, and he appeared weak and feeble.

Preparation for the Hereafter

Ibn Bashār *rahimahullāh* says: "I accompanied Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham to Tarāblis. I did not have

anything apart from two *rotīs* (flat round bread). On the way, a beggar begged us for something, so Ibrāhīm asked me to give the *rotīs* to him. I hesitated a bit, so he said to me: 'What is wrong with you? Why are you not giving him the *rotīs*?' I gave the *rotīs* to the beggar, but was very astonished by Ibrāhīm's behaviour. He said to me: 'Remember, you will certainly get whatever you spend. And you will not get whatever you retain. You should make preparations for the Hereafter because you do not know when the order of your Lord will descend. If you did not make preparations for it, you will regret, and it will be of no benefit to you.' I was overcome by crying when I heard all this, and the value of this world decreased in my sight."

Ibn Bashār *rahimahullāh* relates: "We passed by a graveyard while we were walking with Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham. He went towards a grave, placed his hand on it, and said: 'O such and such person! May Allāh *ta'ālā* have mercy on you.' He did the same to seven graves, then stood in the centre of the graves, mentioned them by name, and called out in a loud voice: 'You have departed from this world, and we will meet you very soon.' He began crying and became fully occupied in thought. He came back to his senses after some time, and turned to us with tears which were like pearls rolling down his cheeks." (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 4, p. 152)

Statements

1. “The sign of an *ʿārif billāh* (one who has truly recognized Allāh *taʿālā*) is that most of his thinking and concern is for goodness and worship, and a major portion of his speech is the praise and glorification [of Allāh *taʿālā*].”

2. He remained in the company of a certain person. When he decided to leave him, the person said: “O Ibrāhīm! If you saw any fault or shortcoming in me, you must certainly inform me of it.” He replied: “O brother! I looked at you with the eyes of love, and that is why I found everything in you to be commendable and excellent. It would be better if you asked someone else in this regard [i.e. about your faults and shortcomings].”

3. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِيْنَ لاَ يُرِيْدُوْنَ عُلُوًّا فِي الأَرْضِ وَلاَ فَسَادًا

“That abode of the Hereafter – We shall give it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the land, nor to cause corruption.” (Sūrah al-Qasas, 28: 83)

He used to say with regard to the desire to exalt one’s self: “Even if you consider your sandal straps to be better than the sandal straps of your fellow brother, it is included in ‘the desire to exalt one’s self’.”

4. “Three types of people should not be reprimanded for their restlessness and agitation:

(1) a sick person, (2) a person who is fasting, (3) a traveller."

Note: Glory to Allāh! He is most correct in this regard. In fact, I think that if any of these persons do something which is against etiquette, they should be excused and overlooked.

5. "People will be taken to account on the day of Resurrection in the presence of their friends and associates so that they are disgraced to the full."

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā*- through His grace and affection – give us refuge from the humiliation of that day.

6. "Seek knowledge for the sake of practising on it because the majority of people have now fallen into error. This has caused their knowledge to be like a mountain, while they are like ants when it comes to actions."

Note: Actions are not confined to salāh and fasting. Rather, they include practising on the character of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, transactions according to the Sharīʿah, and applying Islamic social etiquette.

7. An *ʿālim* sought his advice, so he said to him: "Live like a tail, and not like a head. The tail is normally saved, while the head is destroyed." (This means: remain as a follower as far as possible, and do not try to be a leader because there is nothing but destruction in it).

Note: Glory to Allāh! What beneficial advice. It is most worthy of paying heed to.

8. "A person desiring peace and comfort must remove thoughts of the creation from his heart; he will experience peace and comfort."

Note: The person who does not have his hopes in people will certainly experience peace and comfort.

9. "When we used to see any youngster engaged in conversation in an assembly, we used to lose hope in him and would not expect any good from him."

Note: In other words, it is the duty of youngsters to sit attentively in the assemblies of the pious elders and to listen carefully to what they say. They should neither display their knowledge nor their abilities. Unfortunately, this sickness is quite common. Every youngster wants to not only show that he is very good, but goes to the extent of belittling the elders. This causes the youngster to be completely deprived of spiritual and internal blessings.

10. Someone said to him while he was performing *ṯawāf*: "You cannot reach the rank of the *ṣāliḥīn* (righteous) as long as you do not cross six passes: (1) Shut the door of pomp and luxury, and open the door of poverty and hardship. (2) Shut the door of honour and fame, and open the door of anonymity and obscurity. (3) Shut the door of

desiring comfort and rest. (4) Shut the door of sleep and open the door of wakefulness. (5) Shut the door of affluence and independence, and open the door of poverty and submission. (6) Shut the door of worldly plans and ambitions, and open the door of preparation for death."

Note: We should at least make *duʿāʾ* to Allāh *taʿālā* to inspire us to choose the means of acquiring rectitude and righteousness, and to continue trying to practise on them.

11. "The person who desires name and fame does not have a genuine relationship with Allāh *taʿālā*."

12. "Those who beg are also very good people. In other words, they are being kind to us because they are conveying our provisions to the Hereafter at no cost to us."

Note: The ruling of the Sharīʿah with regard to beggars is another matter, but they will certainly be of benefit to us in the Hereafter – *inshā Allāh* – because they accepted our charity for which we will be rewarded in the Hereafter.

Demise

He passed away in 162 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Aʿyān al-Ḫujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 144)

Hadrat Abū Sulaymān Dā'ūd ibn Nasīr at-Tā'ī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, merits

His name is Dā'ūd, his father's name is Nasīr, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Sulaymān. He is from among the leaders of *tasawwuf*, and a senior shaykh. He was a well-known student of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. In the Tarīqah, he was a *murīd* of Shaykh Habīb Rā'ī *rahimahullāh*. He was an expert in all the sciences. He was a senior *'ālim* and jurist. In fact, he was an imām of the jurists. However, he withdrew from positions of authority, and adopted a life of asceticism, abstention, and piety. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī *rahimahullāh* describes him as a reliable jurist, ascetic, and Taba' Tābi'ī.

Asceticism

Hadrat Ma'rūf Karkhī *rahimahullāh* says: "I have not seen anyone who considered the world worthless more than Shaykh Dā'ūd at-Tā'ī *rahimahullāh*. The world and worldly people had no value in his eyes. On the other hand, although the poor were in real dire circumstances, he would look at them with absolute love and concern.

Note: This is in itself proof of his piety and asceticism. And he was practising on the following instruction of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

إرحموا على أهل البلايا

"Show mercy to the afflicted ones."

Statements

1. "Knowledge is acquired so that one may practise on it as he acquires more and more of it. But if a student spends his entire life acquiring it, when will he practise on it?"

2. He was too ashamed to ask Allāh *taʿālā* for Paradise. He used to say: "I desire salvation from the fire. If I get that, I will bear the ash."

3. "We have become bored with life because of our many sins."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his humility and fear for the Hereafter. O Allāh! Bless us with these qualities. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p.65)

Demise

He passed away in 160 A.H. or 165 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Taqrīb at-Tahdhīb*, p. 200)

Hadrat Bishr ibn Mansūr Sulaymī Basrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Bishr and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad al-Azdī.

Merits

He was a very upright ascetic and abstentious Tabaʿ Tābiʿī. He embellished himself with the creed of *tauhīd* and *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*. He safeguarded himself against every type of external and internal dangers and whisperings.

Ghassān ibn Mufaddal says: "He was from among those people who remind you of Allāh *taʿālā* when you look at them, and think of the Hereafter when you look at their faces." He was of Arab origin. He had taught his sons to make baskets and other items with the leaves of date palms.

Attention to worship

His nephew relates: "I never saw my uncle missing the *takbīr-e-ūlā* (the firs *takbīr* marking the commencement of salāh) or refusing a beggar."

Concern about the Hereafter

He used to say: "Limit the number of people whom you know because you do not know how you will fare in the Hereafter. The fewer people

you know in this world, the less your humiliation in the Hereafter."

Precaution

He encountered a need on one occasion so he went to ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Mahdī. The latter said to him: "Why did you not send a message, I would have come to you." He replied: "I was the one who had work with you." When he was about to leave, ʿAbd ar-Rahmān brought a steed for him." He said: "I do not want my self to get used to [such luxuries]."

He was performing a lengthy salāh with absolute peace and tranquillity on one occasion. But while he was in salāh, he became conscious of a person observing his salāh. When he completed his salāh, he went to the person and said: "There is nothing to be proud about what you saw [referring to his salāh], because Satan engaged in Allāh's worship for countless years with the angels." (*Siyar as-Salāh, Safwatus Safwah, Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 148)

Statements

1. "If you have the opportunity and the time, then do the utmost to increase your knowledge."

Note: Increase in knowledge is desirable. Allāh *taʿālā* ordered His beloved [Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] to make *duʿā'* for increase in knowledge. Allāh *taʿālā* says: "Say: O my Sustainer! Increase me in knowledge."

2. Muhammad ibn Qudāmah relates: “When the time of death of Bishr ibn Mansūr approached, someone said to him: “You must make a bequest with regard to your debts (i.e. with regard to their payment).” He replied: “I have full hope that my Sustainer will pardon me my sins. Why, then, should I not hope about the payment of my debts?” When he passed away, one of his brothers paid off all his debts for him.

Note: This is how Allāh *taʿālā* makes arrangements for His servants.

Demise

He passed away in 180 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower Him with abundant mercy. (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 148)

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Sabīh ibn Sammāk *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul ʿAbbās, and his father's name is Sabīh ibn as-Sammāk. He is a Taba' Tābiʿī.

Merits

He was a resident of Kūfah. He was an admonisher and an ascetic. He heard Ahādīth from Sulaymān Aʿmash and Hishām ibn ʿUrwah. Personalities such as Yahyā ibn Yahyā and Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahumallāh* accepted Hadīth from him.

Statements

1. "Holding on to the principles and casting aside futile things is the mark of intelligent people."

2. "I am astonished at the eye which has a good sleep whereas the angel of death is with it on the pillow."

3. "O man! Has the time not come for you to obey the Being who did not listen to what those who are jealous of you have to say about you!? By the honour of Allāh! Had He listened to those who are jealous of you, you would have been made a lesson of."

4. “The one who is patient over difficulty will have strength to engage in worship. The one who loves good will be blessed with tranquillity.”

5. “When a utensil has a hole, honey cannot be stored in it. When your hearts have holes, they are not worthy of knowledge and wisdom.” (*Hilyatul Auliyā’*, vol. 8, p. 176-178)

Note: What a powerful advice. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to practise on it.

6. “A prerequisite of an ascetic is that he becomes happy when the world departs from him.”

7. “O my brother! Assuming the entire world was in your control, of what good will it be to you? You should ponder over how much of the world will be in your hands when you die.”

8. “There are many who admonish others and remind them of Allāh *taʿālā* while they themselves have forgotten Allāh *taʿālā*. There are many who invite towards Allāh *taʿālā* while they themselves are running away from Him. There are many who recite the Qur’ān but are completely aloof from the *āyāt* (signs) of Allāh *taʿālā*. In other words, the signs of Allāh *taʿālā* do not have any effect on them.” We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: These are most powerful words of advice which ought to be impressed on our hearts and put into action.

A unique observation

"There are many things which are not of any benefit, but also not harmful. But knowledge is something which, if it does not provide benefit, it certainly causes harm [in the case of not practising on it]."

He was delivering an admonition on one occasion when he addressed Hārūn ar-Rashīd saying: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! You enjoy an important position and rank in Allāh's sight. But He is also the one who will deprive you of this position and rank. You should think about your situation, and what position you will hold after that." Hārūn ar-Rashīd thought about his destiny and cried profusely.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the high level of fear and submission of Hārūn ar-Rashīd. It is a lesson for all of us.

Demise

He passed away in 183 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*)

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-ʿUmrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh, his father's name is ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, his grandfather's name is ʿAbdullāh, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān. He is a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Merits

He was an imām of the ascetics and worshippers. Ibn ʿUyaynah said with regard to him: "He was the most knowledgeable of the *ʿulamā'* of Madīnah as regards Hadīth."

Statements

1. Abū Yahyā Zuhrī relates that ʿUmrī said at the time of his death: "I explain Hadīth by Allāh's grace. Even if the world was at my feet, it cannot stop me from acquiring Hadīth." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 8, p. 373)

2. He was a worshipper who used to live near graves. He gave up sitting in the company of people and used to say: "I do not think there is a greater admonisher than the grave. And there is no greater protector of one's *Dīn* than solitude."

3. "A sign of being unmindful of Allāh *taʿālā* is when you pass or see something which is disliked by Him but you do not show your disapproval out of fear for people. When a person does not enjoin

good because of fear for people, the awe of Allāh *taʿālā* is taken away from him."

4. "When a person is extravagant with his own wealth, people stop him from this extravagance. Why, then, should a person who is extravagant with the wealth of the Muslims not be stopped from it!?"

Note: We learn from this that if a person (the one in charge) is extravagant with the wealth in the Bayt al-Māl (Islamic treasury), religious organizations, *madāris*, *khānqāhs*, etc. where the wealth of the Muslim masses are collected, then he will certainly have to be stopped from his action.

Demise

He passed away in Madīnah Munawwarah in 184 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 55)

Hadrat Abū Is-hāq Ibrāhīm ibn Muhammad al-Fazārī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Is-hāq, and his father's name is Muhammad.

Merits

He was a resident of Kūfah. He was an *imām* of the Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah and a *zimām* (one who reins in, curtails) for the Ahl al-Bidʿah. He is enumerated among the senior *ʿulamā'*. He used to remain forever ready for jihād in Allāh's cause. He was a reliable narrator [of Hadīth], and many junior Tābiʿīn narrated from him. Personalities like Imām Auzāʿī, Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak and Imām Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahumullāh* narrated Ahādīth from him. One can gauge his rank and position from this. He was a learned and virtuous Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Glad tidings from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*

Hadrat Fudayl ibn ʿIyād *rahimahullāh* says: "I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream, and there was a vacant place next to him. I went to sit in that place, but Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to me: 'This place is for Abū Is-hāq Fazārī.'"

https://darsenizami.wordpress.com/

Statements

1. The caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd asked him once: "O shaykh! I consider you to be close to me." He replied: "Being close to you will not help me on the day of Resurrection."

2. "Some people like to be praised while they are not even equal to the weight of a wing of a mosquito in Allāh's sight."

3. "A person says:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ عَلٰى كُلِّ حَالٍ

"All praise is due to Allāh taʿālā under every condition."

"If the person was in a good and favourable condition when he said it, it will be recorded as gratitude in his favour. If he said it while he was suffering, it will be a source of consolation for him." (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 8, p. 219)

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is a statement of real *maʿrifat* (cognition) which is really the share of the *ʿārifīn*. May Allāh *taʿālā* give us all a share of this knowledge and *maʿrifat*. Āmīn. And may He enable us to say the above words under all conditions. Āmīn.

Demise

He passed away in 185 A.H. or 186 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 8, p. 539)

Hadrat Abū ʿAmr ʿĪsā ibn Yūnus *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿĪsā, his father's name is Yūnus, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAmr.

Merits

He was a *hāfiz-e-Hadīth* (one who memorized Ahādīth), an awe-inspiring *ʿālim*, and a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī. Worldly wealth and honour was of no value whatsoever in his sight. He was completely independent of the rulers and leaders. Hārūn ar-Rashīd had requested him to teach Hadīth to his two sons, Amīn and Ma'mūn, but he refused. Hārūn ar-Rashīd eventually sent them to him. When he completed conveying the Ahādīth to them, Ma'mūn expressed his wish to present 10 000 dirhams to him. But he refused by saying: "I cannot even accept one hand-scoop of water."

Abstinence

The minister in the Abbasid caliphate, Jaʿfar, presented 100 000 dirhams to him. He returned the money saying: "By Allāh! I cannot give the *ʿulamā'* an opportunity to say that ʿĪsā took a wage for teaching and narrating Hadīth."

It was his practice to go for jihād one year, and for hajj the following year. In this way, he took part in 35 battles and performed hajj 35 times.

Note: Glory to Allāh! These were really fortunate people who were inspired by Allāh *taʿālā*. O Allāh! Inspire us to do such things. Āmīn.

Demise

He passed away in 187 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. In his book, *Sifatus Safwah*, ʿAllāmah Ibn al-Jauzī *rahimahullāh* states that he passed away in 188 A.H., 191 A.H. or 207 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 125)

Hadrat Fudayl ibn ʿAyād *rahimahullāh*

Origins

Fudayl ibn ʿAyād was from among those Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn whose asceticism and piety was proverbial. His family was from a village called Tāliqān which was in the area of Khurāsān. This family settled down in Fanadayn. Abyūrad was a village near Fanadayn, and this is where he was born.

Early life

Although Fudayl was born in a noble family, he did not grow up in a good environment. This caused him to develop bad habits. Within a short time, he became a notorious thief. His robberies became so well-known that they instilled fear and terror in the hearts of travellers going through Khurāsān and its surrounding areas.

Repentance

His night and day were spent in robbing and thieving when divine intervention got hold of him and he was inspired with repentance. The story of his repentance is an eye opener for many people. He fell in love with a woman but could find no way of fulfilling his desires with her. He found an opportunity one day, and was about to climb the wall to her house, when he heard a servant of Allāh *taʿālā* reciting this verse:

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوْبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللهِ

"Has the time not come for the believers that their hearts should feel humble at the remembrance of Allāh?" (Sūrah al-Hadīd, 57: 16)

These inspiring words of Allāh *taʿālā* reached his ears and settled into his heart. The suppressed embers of *īmān* flared up and he responded spontaneously by saying:

يَا رَبِّ انَ وَحَانَ

"O my Allāh! The time has certainly come for me to come out of the ocean of sins and take refuge in Your mercy."

He returned from there immediately. It was night time, so he stopped over in a deserted house. A caravan of travellers had stopped over nearby as well. The travellers were discussing among themselves about when they should continue on their journey. Some were of the opinion that they should depart immediately. The experienced travellers were of the opinion that it was dangerous to travel before the next morning because the caravans of Fudayl lie in wait on these roads. Fudayl says: "I thought to myself that I am engrossed in sinning throughout the night, and the servants of Allāh *taʿālā* fear me! Allāh *taʿālā* did not send me into the world for this purpose."

He then made a sincere repentance and made this *duʿā'*:

أَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّيْ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَعَلْتُ تَوْبَتِيْ مُجَاوَرَةَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ

"O Allāh! I turn to You in repentance. And I make serving the Sanctified House [Kaʿbah] part of my repentance."

After this sincere repentance, he got the desire to acquire *Dīnī* knowledge. He left his homeland and proceeded to Kūfah where he studied under Imām Aʿmash, Shaykh Mansūr and other imāms of Hadīth. Then, as per his promise, he made the Haram Sharīf his permanent place of residence, and spent his entire life there.

His asceticism and piety are the most glorious pages from the book of his life. ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak *rahimahullāh* whose asceticism and piety were themselves proverbial, says: "Fudayl *rahimahullāh* was the most pious man of the time." Another narration states that he said: "I do not think there is anyone superior to him at this time." The caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd used to say: "I did not see a more awe-inspiring person than Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* among the *ʿulamāʾ*, and I did not see anyone more pious than Fudayl ibn ʿAyād."

Hadrat Fudayl ibn ʿAyād *rahimahullāh* was extremely cautious about eating what is *halāl*. This is why he neither accepted the help of the rulers and caliphs, nor of the masses. He would eat the little which he earned from his own hands.

He was intensely in love with the Qur'ān. He would repeat a single verse of the Qur'ān again and again while in salāh. When he used to read the Qur'ān, his voice would become very sorrowful and attractive. He would read by pausing in-between, as if he was addressing someone. (*Taba' Tābi'īn*, vol. 1, p. 453)

Importance to fulfilling rights of fellow humans

The story of his repentance is well-known. However, the importance which he gave to fulfilling the rights of his fellow humans ought to be learned and emulated by every Muslim. This is because a person is not absolved of his rights to his fellow humans merely through repentance. Rather, in order for his repentance to be valid, it is essential for him to fulfil the dues which he is liable for, or to obtain pardon from the respective persons.

Fudayl ibn 'Ayād *rahimahullāh* carried out this to the full. The famous *buzurg* (pious personality), Hadrat Shāh al-'Ālamīn Shaykh 'Abd ar-Razzāq Jhanjhānwī *rahimahullāh* (d. 949 A.H.) makes mention of it in his book, *Sahā'if-e-Ma'rifat*. This has been translated in simple Urdu by Dr. Tanwīr Ahmad 'Alawī (M.A., PhD. Aligarh). I am quoting from this book, the condition of Hadrat Fudayl *rahimahullāh* after he made *taubah*.

"After his repentance, he went home and made it a habit to look in his register and return whatever he stole to its rightful owner. In this way, he won

over all his enemies and opponents, and was left with nothing of the goods of this world."

"He looked in his register one day and noticed that he had usurped 40 000 dīnārs from a Jew in Naysābūr. He had not returned this amount as yet, and did not obtain his pardon."

"He went to the Jew and said: 'I am Fudayl. So many years ago I usurped 40 000 dīnārs from you at a certain place. I have now repented from my robberies, and returned the goods and items to their rightful owners. I have nothing left. I have come to you to tell you to do whatever you like with me – you could ask me to work for you in return, or you could pardon me.' The Jew said: 'You will have to give me my due for me to be pleased with you.'"

"Fudayl *rahimahullāh* came into the employ of the Jew and started working for him. The Jew had read in the Taurāh that if a person from the *ummah* of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* repents sincerely to Allāh *taʿālā*, then by merely placing his hand in soil, it will turn to gold. He thought that this was an ideal opportunity to test this out. He went into his house, filled a purse with sand, placed it on a shelf, and came out of the house. He said to Fudayl: 'I have taken an oath I will not take anything from you, but you will have to do one thing for me. Go into the house and bring my purse which is kept on such and such shelf. If you do this, I will be happy with you.' Fudayl

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went inside, brought the purse from the shelf, and placed it before him. Now look at Allāh's power! The number of gold coins which Fudayl had stolen from the Jew were in the purse."

"This incident had a deep impact on the heart of the Jew. He said to Fudayl: 'You have changed the copper of my *kufr* with the pure gold of *īmān*. You will have to invite me to Islam, your religion is certainly a true religion.' The Jew immediately became a Muslim and seventy others joined him. The following lines are said in this regard:

> "If your face becomes moist with tears, then even soil can change into gold in your hand." (*Sahā'if-e-Ma'rifat*, p. 176)

Statements

1. "The person who merely learnt how to perform salāh and keep fast in abundance from our companionship has really learnt nothing. Instead, he has a real need for generosity in his temperament, purity of his heart, and desiring good for the *ummah*."

Note: We learn that just as one learns the importance of salāh and fasting from the companionship of the pious people, there is an even greater need to learn and develop excellent qualities of the heart from them. This is the real rectification and reformation.

2. "The person who knows his fellow humans has acquired peace and rest."

This means that if a person realizes that man cannot profit him or cause him harm, he will become totally independent of him, and devote his full attention to Allāh *taʿālā*.

3. "When I disobey Allāh *taʿālā* in any way, I perceive it's effect in my donkey, servants, and my wife." In other words, they all become disobedient to me.

4. "If I were given all the comforts and luxuries of this world without any fear of being taken to task for them, I would still recoil from them just as you recoil from eating carrion."

5. "If I were given the good fortune of having my *duʿā's* accepted, I would only make *duʿā'* for the *imām-e-waqt* (the leader of our time). This is because the rectitude of the masses is dependent on the rectitude of the *imām-e-waqt*. If he becomes righteous, the country and its people will find peace and security."

6. "To treat your fellow companions with affection and good character is better than performing optional salāh the entire night and keeping optional fast the entire day."

7. Hārūn ar-Rashīd said to him: "What can I say about your abstention!?" He replied: "You are a greater ascetic than me because I chose disinterest in this world which is more insignificant than the wing of a mosquito. While you have shown no need for the Hereafter in

whose comparison the world has no value at all. I am abstentious of something which is temporary, while you are abstentious of something which is eternal."

According to one narration, he said the above to Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik.

8. "It is *shirk* (polytheism) to do things to show others. And it is *riyā'* (ostentation) to abstain from doing things because of other people. And *ikhlāṣ* (sincerity and devotion) is when Allāh *taʿālā* saves you from both these things."

9. "When you are unable to wake up at night and perform optional ṣalāh and unable to keep optional fast by day, then you must conclude that you are deprived and that your sins have encompassed you."

10. "A person of merit and virtue will only remain as such as long as he does not consider himself to be a man of merit and virtue."

Note: To consider yourself to be a man of merit and virtue is actually haughtiness and self-opinionated, and these are evil qualities which prevent a person from progressing. Maulānā Rūm *raḥimahullāh* writes in this regard:

> "He is not progressing towards Allāh *taʿālā* because he is claiming merits and virtues for himself."

On the other hand, the person who looks at his defects and shortcomings is moving swiftly towards Allāh *taʿālā*.

11. "There is a prelude and forerunner to everything. The prelude and forerunner of the *ʿulamā'* is that they give up *ghībah* (backbiting) first."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent prelude which every *ʿālim* ought to practise on.

12. "It does not behove a bearer of the Qur'ān (one who memorized the Qur'ān, or has knowledge of the Qur'ān) to mention his needs before the leaders and affluent people. Rather, his position demands that people come to him for the fulfilment of their needs." (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 456)

We now quote a few statements from *Tabaqāt Kubrā*.

1. "People of merit are those who do not look at their own merits (i.e. they do not look at their merits with pride and haughtiness)."

2. "The person who wants his words and opinions to be heard is not an ascetic."

3. "When an enemy backbites you, he is causing more benefit to you than your friend because

whenever he backbites you, you will continue receiving [the reward] for his good deeds."

4. "This is not a time of happiness; it is a time of sorrow and sadness." He used to provide water and earned a living in this way. He provided for his self and his family from this income.

5. "When Allāh *taʿālā* loves a person, He increases worldly grief for him. When He dislikes a person, He expands the world for him so that he may become trapped by it and remain there. As for the *auliyā'*, Allāh *taʿālā* saves them from such occupation which would interfere with their bond and affinity with Him."

6. "I would rather take an oath and say that I am a show off than take an oath and say that I am not a show off."

Note: Just imagine! Such a devoted person is attesting to being a show off. This certainly shows his humility and submission.

7. "It does not behove a bearer of the Qur'ān to have his needs fulfilled by the rich and people in authority. Rather, it is more appropriate for people to have their needs fulfilled by the bearers of the Qur'ān."

8. "As far as possible, remain far from the materialistic *qurrā'* (plural of *qārī*) and *ʿulamā'*. If they like you, they will praise you for things which you do not have. And if – Allāh forbid –

they are angry with you, they will give false testimonies against you, and their statements will be accepted (and this will cause you harm)."

9. Hadrat Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah *rahimahullāh* was present before him on one occasion. He addressed him saying: "O group of *ʿulamāʾ*! You were the lamps of the cities from whom light was obtained. But you have become absolute darkness. You were stars through whom guidance was obtained. But now you yourselves are confused. Is an *ʿālim* from among you not ashamed of Allāh *taʿālā* that he goes to the wealthy to obtain wealth from them, without even knowing whether they obtained it from lawful or unlawful sources!? He then leans with his back against the *mihrāb* (the semi-circular section at the front of a musjid) and says: 'So and so narrated this Hadīth to me on the authority of so and so.' On hearing this, Hadrat Sufyān lowered his head and said: 'We ask forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā*, and we turn in repentance to Him.'"

Note: Glory to Allāh! These were our *mashāʾikh* and *ʿulamāʾ*. The Shaykh-e-Waqt, Hadrat Fudayl *rahimahullāh,* spoke the truth without any hesitation. Then look at the sincerity of the Faqīh-e-ʿAsr (jurist of the time), Hadrat Sufyān *rahimahullāh* – he accepted without any hesitation, lowered his head in remorse, sought forgiveness, and repented to Allāh *taʿālā*.

If we were to compare ourselves to these personalities, we will realize that we neither have

the courage to speak the truth, nor the capacity to accept it without hesitation. In fact, it will be remarkable if we just pondered over it. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

10. "Backbiting (*ghībah*) is the tasty fruit of the *ʿulamā'*."

11. "If a person looks for a faultless friend in this world, he will end up with no friend at all."

Note: Every person – except whom Allāh *taʿālā* wills – has some fault or the other. If he were to search for a friend who has no fault, he will be deprived of a friend.

12. "Brotherhood has died in today's times. People of the past used to take care of their brother's children when he passed away. They would take care of his children as though they were his own. He would continue seeing to them until they reached the age of maturity."

Note: Today, the opposite is true. Today, it will be a great thing if a person fulfils the rights of his brother while he is alive, let alone caring for his brother's children – except whom Allāh *taʿālā* wills.

13. "Such a person is not your brother – one who is displeased with you when you refuse to give him something which he asked you for."

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14. “Although Hadrat was an Abyssinian slave, he was a judge among the Banū Isrā’īl because he had the habit of speaking the truth and abstaining from futile talks.”

15. “The person who acquires knowledge of the Qur’ān will be questioned just as the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* will be questioned about conveying the message. This is because the *ʿulamā’* are the inheritors of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*.”

16. “If the *ʿulamā’* were abstentious, the proud and haughty ones would have submitted before them, and people would have become their followers. But these people spent their knowledge on the materialists so that they could acquire the wealth which they have. Consequently, they became despicable and wretched in their eyes.”

17. “A sign of an abstentious person is that when he is referred to as an ignorant person by the wealthy and their associates, he is happy about it (because he does not have to become involved with them, and he has the opportunity to remain occupied with Allāh *taʿālā*).”

Note: But today the situation is that the knowledgeable demonstrate their knowledge and actions to the wealthy so that the latter can become their followers. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

18. “The person who is fully aware of the food which goes into his stomach is a *siddīq* in the sight of Allāh *taʿālā*. O man! Think about where your food is coming from.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how he is teaching and encouraging us to eat what is lawful. This is one of the principles of the Tarīqah.

Demise

He passed away in the Haram Sharīf in 187 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 58)

Hadrat Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyāsh *rahimahullāh*

Name

His name is Shuʿbah, his father's name is ʿAyāsh, his grandfather's name is Sālim Asadī, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bakr.

He was a *qārī, faqīh* (jurist) and *muhaddith*. His title was Shaykh al-Islam. He was born in 95 A.H.

Asceticism

Yahyā ibn Ayyūb narrates from ʿAbdullāh an-Nakhaʿī who said: "A bed was not made for Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyāsh for fifty years." (In other words, he did not sleep on a bed at night).

Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah *rahimahullāh* said: "Abū Bakr ibn ʿAyāsh said to me: 'I saw the world in a dream. It had the appearance of an old ugly woman.'" (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 8, p. 495)

Statements

1. "The poor lover of this world is such that if one dirham of his falls, he will say *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rājiʿūn* (to Allāh we belong and to Him is our return) the entire day. But when his life and *Dīn* decrease, he is not saddened by it."

2. "Popularity is the minimum harm of speaking, and this is sufficient as a calamity."

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Demise

He passed away in 193 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 53)

Hadrat Shuʿayb ibn Harb Madā'inī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Shuʿayb, his father's name is Harb, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Sālih. He was an imām of his time, a shaykh al-Islam, and a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Merits

Hadrat Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* relates: "Abū Khaythamah and I went to Shuʿayb. I said to Abū Khaythamah to ask a question to Shuʿayb. So he went forward to ask him. He noticed that his sleeves were long, so he asked him: 'Should a person who writes Hadīth have long sleeves?' He replied: 'O boy! Leave me alone.' We got up from there and he did not relate any Hadīth to us."

Note: I think he considered this question to be futile, this is why he did not answer it and did not speak to them. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

من حسن إسلام المرء تركه ما لا يعنيه

"The beauty of a person's Islam lies in casting aside things which do not concern him."

Ahmad ibn Husayn relates: "I heard Surī Saqatī *rahimahullāh* saying: 'There are four people who only obtained *halāl* sustenance, and only ate *halāl*: (1) Wuhayb ibn Ward, (2) Shuʿayb ibn

Harb, (3) Yūsuf ibn Asbāt, and (4) Sulaymān Khawwās." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 9, p. 188)

Abstention and asceticism

He was unique in his abstention, asceticism, worship, and piety. He heard Ahādīth from Sufyān and Shuʿbah. He first lived in Madā'in (in Iraq), then came to Makkah, lived there and died there. His abstention and disinclination from the world can be gauged from the following: When he was in Madā'in, he lived in a shack on the banks of the Tigris River. He had a net in which his water-can and bread was left suspended. At night, he would take a bread, dip it in the water-can, and eat it. His body was reduced to skin and bones. Despite this, he would hold a part of his body and say: "This part still has some meat left on it. By Allāh, I will try to melt it so that when I go into my grave, I will have nothing but bones. I will not get fat to become the food for insects and worms."

Note: This was an excellent condition for him, but not necessary for everyone. If a person does not do this, he will not be reprimanded according to the Sharīʿah.

Statements

1. When he was in Makkah, a person came to him. He asked him: "Why have you come?" The man replied: "So that I could keep you company in your solitude." He said: "You have come to give

me company while I have been practising for the last forty years to remain alone."

2. "Do not sit by anyone except for two persons: (1) a person who teaches you some good, and you accept it, (2) a person whom you teach good, and he accepts it. Stay far away from anyone apart from these two."

3. "You may plaster your houses from inside, but you do not have the right to plaster the walls on the outside because this could impose on the road, even if it is very little."

Note: Unfortunately, today it is generally considered to be nothing serious if a person builds a metre or two beyond his boundary – even if this causes the road to become narrow and restricted.

4. "The person who desires authority and position will have to fight against others who also desire the same. As for the person who wants to be a tail, Allāh *taʿālā* will certainly make him a head."

Note: In other words, Allāh *taʿālā* will convey him towards leadership. A Hadīth states:

مَنْ تَوَاضَعَ للهِ رَفَعَهُ اللهُ

"Allāh taʿālā elevates the one who humbles himself for Him."

Demise

He passed away in Makkah in 197 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 192)

Hadrat ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Mahdī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Saʿīd, and his father's name was Mahdī. He was born in 135 A.H. in Basra during the commencement of the Abbasid caliphate.

Education and training

Abū ʿĀmir ʿAqdī relates: "He used to frequent those who used to narrate stories. I said to him that remaining in their company will not benefit him in any way. Consequently, my advice became the means for his interest in Hadīth. His quest for Hadīth increased to such an extent that he travelled thousands of kilometres from Basra to the city of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* – Madīnah Munawwarah – joined the classes of Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*, and quenched his thirst for knowledge in this way. The classes of Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* used to be very serious and solemn. As long as the lessons were being delivered, a person could not move from his place, nor could he change his posture."

Character

He was distinguished for his character and mannerisms. Ibn Jauzī *rahimahullāh* lists him among the pious and ascetic Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn. His abstinence was of such a level that if he had the slightest doubt about something being *harām*, he

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would abstain from it. He used to say: "When you leave something for Allāh's pleasure and happiness, He will certainly return it to you."

Advice

He used to advise the *'ulamā'* thus: "When a person meets someone who is more senior and virtuous than him, he must consider his companionship to be a boon. If he meets someone who is on his level, he must try to benefit from him and exchange views with him. If he meets someone below him, he must humble himself before him and benefit him with his knowledge and merits."

Together with his knowledge, acumen, character and mannerisms, he also distinguished himself with his worship and spiritual exercises. His son relates that he used to spend the major portion of the night in optional salāh and recitation of the Qur'ān. It was his habit to read half the Qur'ān daily. He remained awake for the whole night on one occasion, but fell asleep in the morning, causing him to miss his *fajr salāh*. He was so remorseful that he did not lie on the ground [did not sleep] for several days. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 8, p. 397)

His classes

His companions who used to attend his classes used to sit as though birds were perched on their heads.

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Note: This was the level of respect for their teacher, and this is how the students became successful.

Statements

1. While he was teaching one day, one of his students was overcome by laughter. So he said to him: "You have come to seek knowledge, and you are laughing!? You must not attend for two months." The student was banned from attending classes for two months. He sought pardon from him, so he said to him: "A person ought to seek knowledge, but he must continue crying because he is establishing proof against his *nafs*. There are very few who seek knowledge for the sake of practising on it."

2. "I do not envy anyone except the believer who is gone to his grave."

Note: *Māshā Allāh!* What an excellent condition – he feared trials and tribulations, so he preferred going into the grave in order to save himself from them. But many *Ahlullāh* prefer remaining in this world, doing good deeds, and acquiring proximity to Allāh *taʿālā* in this way. They practise on this Hadīth:

من طال عمره وحسن عمله

"An excellent person is one who has a long life and does good deeds."

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Demise

He passed away in 198 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* show His abundant mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 54)

Hadrat Yahyā ibn Saʿīd al-Qattān *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

He was from a family of slaves, but he is listed among the renowned Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn because of his knowledge and acumen. His family hailed from Basra and he was born there in 120 A.H.

Education and training

When Shaykh Ibn Saʿīd came into this world, every area and district of the Islamic state was echoing with the words of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Allāh *taʿālā* had willed for him to undertake the task of codifying Hadīth. This is why He inspired him to go to those who were imāms in this field. If we were to look at the names of his *shuyūkh*, we will conclude that he went to all the *muhaddithūn* of his time no matter which part of the Islamic world they were in. Imām Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh* is the most noteworthy of his teachers because he was the source of all scholars at the time. Ibn Saʿīd *rahimahullāh* remained in his company for twenty consecutive years, listening to Hadīth from him.

Imām Nawawī *rahimahullāh* writes that Yahyā ibn Saʿīd studied under fifty *shuyūkh* who were the teachers of a renowned *muhaddith* like Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh*. Yahyā ibn Saʿīd distinguished himself during his student days by his extraordinary intelligence and strong memory. Imām Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh* and Sufyān Thaurī

rahimahullāh who themselves were renowned for these qualities express their astonishment at Yahyā's intelligence and memory. When these qualities of his became known to others, people from all over gathered around him out of their thirst for the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*

Knowledge and virtue

Based on his knowledge, virtue, asceticism and piety, he was a glittering pearl among the Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn. All the imāms of Hadīth and *fiqh* acknowledged his acumen and excellence. Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* was asked: "Who is more knowledgeable between Wakīʿ ibn Jarrāh and Yahyā ibn Saʿīd?" He replied: "I have not seen anyone as knowledgeable as Yahyā." His knowledge and acumen can be gauged from the fact that when there was any difference among the imāms of Hadīth over a particular issue, Yahyā would be appointed as the arbitrator.

There was some difference on a particular issue in the presence of Imām Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh*. Those who differed with him asked him to appoint someone as an arbitrator. He decided to appoint Yahyā ibn Saʿīd. The issue was presented to him. He passed a decision against Imām Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh* although the latter was an imām of the time and a senior teacher. But look at the teacher's desire for the truth: He accepts his student's decision and says: "O Yahyā! How will we bear your absence?"

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Note: This shows that a teacher can praise his student directly.

Worship, character and mannerisms

Yahyā ibn Saʿīd *rahimahullāh* was a living example of Islam in his character, mannerisms, piety and righteousness. Obedience and submission to Allāh *taʿālā* was displayed in every action. One cannot find a single example in his entire life where he may have disobeyed Allāh *taʿālā*. One of his students who remained in his service for twenty consecutive years says: "I remained with Ibn Saʿīd for twenty years, I do not think he disobeyed Allāh *taʿālā* in any way during this period."

Note: The pious personalities have a famous saying:

اَلإِسْتِقَامَةُ فَوْقَ الْكَرَامَةُ

"Steadfastness is superior to karāmat (supernatural feats)."

For Yahyā ibn Saʿīd *rahimahullāh* not to commit a single act of disobedience in twenty years shows his steadfastness which is superior to a thousand *karāmāt*.

Simplicity and contentment

He was an embodiment of deliberation, simplicity, and contentment. His grandson relates: "My grandfather would not laugh and joke, nor would

he laugh out aloud. He was neither in the habit of applying oil and *surmah* (antimony) for the purposes of beautification and adornment. An argument took place between himself and his neighbour. The neighbour began insulting him, but Yahyā could not say anything to him. So he started to cry, and said: "He has spoken the truth. I am nothing, I am worthless." The neighbour probably criticized him over the fact that he was a slave.

Ibn ʿImād says: "Yahyā ibn Saʿīd looked like a very ordinary person. But when he used to commence a Hadīth lesson, the most senior jurists would not have the courage to speak."

Demise

He passed away at the age of 78 in 198 A.H. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 377)

Hadrat Yūsuf ibn Asbāt *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Yūsuf and his father's name is Asbāt. He was the chief of the *mashā'ikh* and he made many wise and admonitory statements.

How to save one's self from *harām*

Hadrat Musayyib *rahimahullāh* says: "I asked Hadrat Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* about abstention, so he said: 'You must adopt abstention even when taking *halāl* wealth. As for the *harām*, if you were not abstentious with regard to it, you will be punished.'"

Statements

1. "The heart was created for the *dhikr* of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Unfortunately, it has become a refuge for desires of the *nafs*. Desires of the *nafs* cause restlessness which can only be put to an end through Allāh's fear. The most difficult thing to do is to remain abstentious from position and fame."

Note: This is why it is said that the last thing to leave the heart of the *siddīqīn* (the highest stage after prophet-hood) is the illness of love for position and fame.

2. "The peak of humility is when you leave your house, you consider every person whom you meet to be better than you."

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Note: No one knows about one's final destiny. How, then, can anyone consider himself to be superior?

3. "The person who reads the Qur'ān and becomes inclined towards the world has actually made a mockery of Allāh's verses."

4. "An *ʿālim* fears his good deeds must not prove to be more harmful than sins."

Note: This fear in an *ʿālim* is the fruit of knowledge and *maʿrifat*.

5. There was a very pious personality who used to say: "Independence of and indifference to leadership, name and fame are far more difficult than indifference to wealth and riches." (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*)

6. "A deed which has even a seed of ostentation will not be accepted by Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: A Hadīth states:

إِنَّ يَسِيْرَ الرِّيَاءِ شِرْكٌ

"Even a little ostentation is polytheism."

How, then, can it be accepted?

Demise

He passed away in 199 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Sifatus Safwah*, *Siyar as-Salaf*)

Hadrat ʻUmar ibn Saʻd *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʻUmar, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Dā'ūd, and his father's name is Saʻd. He is well known as Abū Dā'ūd Hadramī.

Knowledge and merits

His lofty position in knowledge was accompanied by worship, constant turning to Allāh *taʻālā*, poverty and independence. He was honoured with the companionship of senior Tābiʻīn of his time and deriving benefit from their treasures of knowledge. Wherever he went, people of that place would consider it to be safe from every calamity and disaster. A senior imām like Hāfiz Wakīʻ *rahimahullāh* says:

إن كان يدفع البلاء بأحد في زماننا فبأبي داؤد الحضرمي

"If calamity was repulsed in our time, it was through Abū Dā'ud al-Hadramī."

When Imām Abū Nuʻaym used to go to him, he would seat himself before him with absolute respect and deference. He used to say about him: "After Imām Husayn al-Juʻfī, there was no Tabaʻ Tābiʻī in Kūfah who was superior to him."

Poverty and frugalness

Despite his vast knowledge, his simplicity, humility and frugal lifestyle were practical

examples of the first era of Islam. Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* says: "I saw Abū Dā'ūd Hadramī wearing a worn out and torn *jubbah* (cloak) whose wool was falling out. He was performing salāh between the *maghrib* and *'ishā salāhs*, and he was weak from hunger."

He used to shear wool, sell it, and earn a *halāl* living in this way.

Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi says: "Abū Dā'ūd Hadramī narrated Ahādīth to us. If you were to see him, you would think he looked into the Hell-fire and saw what it really is."

Note: Look at the level of fear for the Hereafter and submission before Allāh *ta'ālā* of our pious elders – they used to tremble out of its fear all the time. May Allāh *ta'ālā* convey us to a similar condition, in fact, an even higher condition.

Demise

He passed away in Jumādā al-Ukhrā in 203 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, *Taba' Tābi'īn*, vol. 2, p. 268)

Hadrat Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Idrīs, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh. He was born in 150 A.H.

Education

Hadrat Humaydī *rahimahullāh* narrates from Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* who said: "I was an orphan, and my mother had no money to pay to my teacher. Despite this, he was prepared to teach me. When I completed the Qur'ān, I began going to the different *masājid*, would sit in the assemblies of the *ʿulamā'*, and learn Ahādīth and *masā'il* (rules and regulations)."

Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* said: "I was seven years old when I memorized the Qur'ān, and learnt the *Muwattā* of Imām Muhammad when I was ten years old." (*Sifatus Safwah*) ʿAllāmah Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* lists him as a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Deep knowledge

One of his salient traits was that no matter in which direction he turned his attention, he acquired mastery in it. He possessed vast knowledge in every branch of knowledge. Allāh *taʿālā* blessed him with deep knowledge of the Qur'ān, Sunnah, speech of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*, statements and conditions of

the pious elders, different views of the *'ulamā'*, language of the Arabs, poetry, etc.

Hadīth

His deep knowledge of Hadīth and its accompanying sciences was acknowledged by his very own teachers. Seven hundred students at a time would gather around him. The author of *Raudāt* writes that Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* was undoubtedly the first person to speak about *mukhtalif al-Hadīth* (differences among Ahādīth).

Fiqh

Imām Shāfiʿī held the position of a *mujtahid* in the field of jurisprudence. Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* said: "Fiqh was a lock for the jurists which Allāh *taʿālā* opened through Imām Shāfiʿī."

Teachers

ʿAllāmah Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* says that Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* had 80 *shuyūkh*. His famous *shuyūkh* include Imām Mālik, Imām Muhammad, Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah and Fudayl ibn ʿAyād *rahimahumullāh*. (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*)

Acknowledgement of his merit and excellence

Muslim ibn Khālid Zanjī said to Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh*: "O Abū ʿAbdillāh! The time has come for you to issue *fatāwā*." This was when he was not even twenty years old.

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Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* said: "A Hadīth states that Allāh *taʿālā* will send a *mujaddid* (reviver) in every century. We found Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz as the *mujaddid* of the first century, and Hadrat Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* as the *mujaddid* of the second century."

Maymūnī said: "I heard Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* saying: 'I make *duʿā'* for six people when I perform *tahajjud*. Imām Shāfiʿī is one of them."

Division of time

It is said that Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* used to divide the night into three parts: the first part for writing, the second part for salāh, and the third part for sleep.

Love for the Qur'ān

Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* used to complete the Qur'ān sixty times in the month of Ramadān. And what he used to read in salāh is not included in this. (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 2, p. 248)

Statements

1. "When an authentic (*sahīh*) Hadīth is found, that is my *maslak* (view)."

2. "Seeking knowledge is superior to optional salāh."

3. “The person who would like good to be decreed for him should have good thoughts about people.”

4. “The most beautifying thing for the *ʿulamāʾ* is poverty and contentment, and to be pleased with these qualities.”

5. “The most obvious thing in man is his weakness. The person who observes his weakness will acquire steadfastness with Allāh *taʿālā*.”

6. “Acquire knowledge before you become a leader because there will be no way of acquiring it once you become a leader.”

7. “The beauty of *ʿulamāʾ* is noble-mindedness. And the embellishment of knowledge is abstinence and forbearance.”

8. “Knowledge is not what is learnt, it is what benefit it provides.”

9. “People are generally unmindful with regard to Sūrah al-ʿAs̱r (i.e. they do not realize its importance. All the essential rules of the *Dīn* are mentioned in this short sūrah).”

10. He used to walk around with an *ʿas̱ā* (walking stick). When someone asked him about it, he said: “I walk with it because I am conscious of my weakness and limitations – that I am going to depart from this world.”

11. “The person who is overpowered by love for this world will inevitably be enslaved by the materialists.”

12. “The person who desires the effulgence of the heart to be opened to him will have to adopt solitude and eat less, he will have to remain aloof from foolish people and remain far from those *ʿulamāʾ* who are hankering after this world.”

13. “It is essential for an *ʿālim* to have a *wird* or *wazīfah* (a form of *dhikr*) which is between himself and Allāh *taʿālā*.”

14. “If you try your utmost to please every single person, you will never realize it. A servant should rather purify the deeds which are between himself and Allāh *taʿālā*.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent piece of advice which is a real fact. Only if a person acts on it will he obtain tranquillity in his heart.

15. “The true recognition of ostentation (*riyāʾ*) is known to the truly sincere ones alone.”

Note: This is because they are always concerned about safeguarding themselves against it. Allāh *taʿālā* bestows them with its recognition so that they may acquire the treasure of sincerity.

16. “If I am told that cold water will decrease my quality of self-respect (*murūwwat*), I will not drink

it." He also used to say: "People of *murūwwat* are constantly in effort and striving."

Note: He said something which is acquired after much experience.

17. "A person who desires a good end [a good death] must have good thoughts about people."

Note: This shows that good thoughts affirm good deeds. Furthermore, there is no need for any proof to have good thoughts about people. So what difficulty is there in practising it?

18. "There is nothing which brings more joy than the companionship of brothers and friends. In the same way, there is nothing which brings more sorrow than their separation."

19. "If someone backbites about another person to you, you must conclude that he will most certainly backbite about you to someone else. If you make someone happy and he praises you for a quality which is not in you, then you must know that when he is displeased with you, he will say evil things about you which are not found in you."

Note: In other words, do not take the praises of such a person to heart. Instead, you should be on your guard with him because you do not know what he will say and when he will say it.

20. “If a person tells something beneficial to another in privacy, he has actually advised him and embellished him. As for the one who scolded him and reprimanded him in public, he has actually humiliated him and found fault with him.”

21. “Pride is from among the characteristics of wretched people. Contentment is a cause of comfort.”

22. “The most valuable person among people is the one who does not consider himself of any value. The most virtuous and noble person is the one who does not consider himself to be virtuous and noble.”

23. “The person who conceals his secret will remain master of his situation.”

24. “Being too friendly and informal causes a person to attract evil people towards himself. And retracting too much from them and being totally indifferent to them will cause their enmity. You should adopt an approach which balances between reservation and friendliness.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the balance in the teachings of our elders! There is nothing but good in practising on them.

25. “The person who listens to matters of knowledge and cognition with his ears will merely be a narrator of these matters. The one who

listens to them with his heart will remember and safeguard them. The one who practises on them and conveys them to people will be a *hādī* (a guide)."

Note: People obtain guidance from such speakers. If not, they listen with one ear and let it pass through the other, as we observe.

26. "I desire every Muslim to send abundant *salāt wa salām* (peace and salutations) to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*."

27. "If I see a *bidʿatī* flying in the air, I will not accept it."

Note: In other words, I will not consider him to be a *sāhib-e-karāmat* (one who has performed a supernatural feat), nor will I consider him to be a *walī*. This is because *wilāyat* (close friendship with Allāh *taʿālā*) cannot combine with *bidʿat*.

Demise

Hadrat Rabīʿ *rahimahullāh* relates: "I was with Hadrat Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* on the night he passed away. I asked him: 'How are you feeling?' He replied: 'I am about to depart from the world, be separated from my beloved ones, drink the drink of death, meet my evil deeds, and be presented before my Benevolent Allāh.' He began crying after saying this."

Note: Look at the condition of Hadrat Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh*: although he had spent his

entire life in *ijtihād*, deriving rules and regulations, and spending his time in the obedience and worship of Allāh *taʿālā*, he feared the Hereafter so much. This is a special condition and rank of the close friends of Allāh *taʿālā*. In fact, it is their hallmark. Unfortunately, we follow their rulings but do not follow their spiritual conditions. Whereas there is a need for this also, so that we can combine the external and the internal.

Demise

He only lived to the age of 54, out of which, he spent just over four years in Egypt. He passed away in Egypt on the night of Friday, after *maghrib* in the year 204 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him and may He illuminate his grave. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 44)

Hadrat Abū Sulaymān ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn ʿAtīyyah Dārānī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Sulaymān, and he is popularly known by it. His father's name is Ahmad and grandfather's name is ʿAtīyyah. He was originally from Wāsit but moved to Dāriyā. This is why he is known as Dārānī. Dāriyā is situated in a section of Damascus.

Merits

The Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn had many leaders and personalities of knowledge and the sciences. Abū Sulaymān was also from among them. Although he did not enjoy a very prominent academic position, he enjoyed an extraordinary position as regards his asceticism, piety, rectitude, guidance, and lofty spiritual levels. Good deeds were the jewels of his life, and worship and spiritual exercises were his hallmarks. Abū Sulaymān Dārānī *rahimahullāh* is included among the senior righteous personalities of the *ummah*. He certainly had a high position in knowledge and deeds, but he was a far greater Sufi, shaykh-e-Tarīqah, and *buzurg* of *Dīn*. His chest was an accumulation of the Sharīʿah and Tarīqah. He benefited an entire world with his teaching, tutoring, purification and guidance.

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Acquisition of knowledge

He studied Hadīth under the famous *muhaddithīn* of Iraq. He had the honour being a student of choice *ʿulamā'* of Hadīth like Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī and Rabīʿ ibn Sabīh *rahimahumallāh*. (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*)

Rectification and purification

The more splendorous pages of his life were related to the chapter on *sulūk* and *tasawwuf*. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* says: "He was an expert swimmer in the shore-less ocean of spirituality and cognition."

Hadrat Samʿānī *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was an erudite person of his time, an ardent worshipper, and from among the choice people and ascetics of Shām." (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 2, p. 48)

Statements

1. "An excellent deed is to act against the desires of the soul. If anything from your children, wealth, and house causes you to be unmindful of Allāh *taʿālā*, then it is a cause of misfortune to you."

2. "I was occupied in *duʿā'* in the *mihrāb* one night, and both my hands were extended towards Allāh *taʿālā* when I felt very cold. I withdrew one hand, was overcome by sleep, and fell asleep. Someone from the unseen called out to me saying: 'O Abu Sulaymān! We placed in your extended hand everything which you wanted. Had

you left the other hand extended, we would have filled it as well.'"

Abū Sulaymān says: "After this incident I took an oath that no matter how hot or cold it is, I will keep both my hands extended at the time of *duʿā'*."

3. Ahmad ibn Abū al-Hawārī relates: "Hadrat Abū Sulaymān Dārānī was overcome by the desire to eat hot *rotīs* with salt. I brought them for him. He broke a small piece and then threw the remaining *rotī*. He then started to cry profusely, and was saying these words:

يَا رَبِّ عَجَلَتْ لِيْ شَهْوَتِيْ

"O my Allāh! The desire of my soul overpowered me. I repent to You with full sincerity."

The narrator says that he did not eat salt for the rest of his life. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, p. 45)

4. "The person who sought this world with independence [i.e. without relying on it] and through lawful means shall meet Allāh *taʿālā* on the day of Resurrection while his face will be glittering like the fourteenth moon." (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, p. 47)

Note: Glory to Allāh! This proves the virtue of reliance and independence.

5. “It does not behove a Sufi to worry more about the cleanliness of his clothes than what he worries about the purity of his heart. Rather, his internal self must be like his external.” Ahmad ibn al-Hawārī *rahimahullāh* says: “I heard Abū Sulaymān saying: ‘If only my heart was like my clothes.’ His clothes at the time were of average value, yet he was saying this.”

6. Ahmad ibn al-Hawārī *rahimahullāh* relates: “I said to Abū Sulaymān: ‘Yesterday I performed my salāh in solitude and I experienced real enjoyment in it.’ He said: ‘Do you know what is more enjoyable than that?’ I said: ‘That no one must see me.’ He said: ‘O Ahmad! You are still weak. When your heart feels threatened at people making mention of you, then this is proof of weakness.’”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how he is teaching him and tutoring him not to worry about what people have to say. Whether people see you or not, the level of your worship must be the same. Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh* wrote to his shaykh, Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* with regard to his internal condition as follows: “The praise and criticism of people has become equal in my sight.” O Allāh! Bestow us with this lofty level. Āmīn.

7. Hadrat Ahmad ibn al-Hawārī *rahimahullāh* relates: “Hadrat Abū Sulaymān said to me: ‘When a person eats his fellow brother’s food in order to please him, the food does not harm him in the

least. But if the food is eaten with desire of the *nafs*, it is harmful. The reason for this is that when the pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā* is sought through a certain thing, it results in good and well-being.'" (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 68)

8. Ahmad ibn al-Hawārī *rahimahullāh* relates: "I heard my teacher saying this again and again: 'The root of goodness and piety in this world and the Hereafter is Allāh's fear. Remember, the key to this world is for a person to live life to the full. And the key to the Hereafter is for a person to remain hungry.'"[1]

9. Ibn al-Hawārī *rahimahullāh* relates: "I read this verse before Shaykh Abū Sulaymān on one occasion:

إِلاَّ مَنْ أَتَى اللهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيْمٍ

"Except the one who comes to Allāh with a sound heart."

So the Shaykh said: 'A person with a sound heart in the true sense is a person who meets Allāh

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[1] 'Allāmah Ibn al-Jauzī *rahimahullāh* explains this in *Sifatus Safwah* as follows: "If a person wants success in the Hereafter, he must not fall into the luxuries and comforts of this world. There is an overpowering of fear and turning to Allāh *taʿālā* in the condition of poverty and need. On the other hand, affluence and wealth cause a person to be unmindful of Allāh *taʿālā*. (footnote of *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 2, p. 49)

taʿālā while there was no presence of anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā* in his heart.' On saying this, Shaykh Ibn al-Hawārī *rahimahullāh* began crying, and said: 'Ever since I settled down in Shām, I did not hear a better statement of Hadrat Shaykh Dārānī than this one. Without doubt, he was from among the special servants of Allāh *taʿālā* who met Allāh *taʿālā* while there was no presence of anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā* in his heart."

10. "A thief does not go to steal from a deserted and empty house. He will only go to a place which is filled with wealth and money. The same applies to the accursed Satan – he tries to get control of the hearts which are filled with fear of Allāh *taʿālā*, turning to Allāh *taʿālā*, *dhikr* and *fikr*."

Note: What words of wisdom and cognition which every Muslim ought to bear in mind. A Muslim should not get agitated by whisperings, and not allow himself to feel constricted. In fact, he should not even pay any attention to these whisperings and thoughts.

11. "People are accumulating wealth and trying to be as wealthy as possible. Their assumption that wealth lies in abundance of possessions is totally wrong. The genuine wealthy person is the one who has the wealth of contentment. In like manner, comfort is not in prosperity. Rather, it is in destitution. People generally search for comfort in soft and fine garments, exquisite foods, and comfortable homes. Whereas real comfort and

rest lies in Islam, *īmān*, good deeds and the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is a fact which instils one with *īmān*.

12. Ibn al-Hawārī *rahimahullāh* says: "My shaykh would constantly say:

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ إِذَا جَاعَتْ وَعَطَشَتْ صَفَا الْقَلْبُ وَرَقَّ، وَإِذَا شَبِعَتْ عَمَى الْقَلْبُ

"When the nafs is hungry and thirsty, the heart becomes purified and soft. But when it is full, the heart becomes blind."

13. "The person who sought this world with independence and through *halāl* means will meet Allāh *taʿālā* on the day of Resurrection while his face will be glittering like the fourteenth moon." (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 2, p. 51)

Note: Glory to Allāh! These are facts which we should not only bear in mind, but endeavour to reach these conditions and levels.

Demise

ʿAllāmah Ibn al-Jauzī *rahimahullāh* quotes two opinions with regard to Hadrat Abū Sulaymān Dārānī's year of death – 205 A.H. and 215 A.H. He considers the first to be more correct. (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 4, p. 234)

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Miʿdān al-Bannā' *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and his father's name is Yūsūf ibn Miʿdān al-Bannā'.

Merits

It is said that he recorded and heard Ahādīth from 300 *muhaddithīn*. This means that he was a powerful *muhaddith*. After this, he was overcome by the desire to be aloof from people and remain in solitude. He left for Makkah Muʿazzamah and travelled all alone through desolate regions. He has the honour of being a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

It is said that he used to work as a mason by day. He would keep a little of whatever he earned for himself, and spend the remainder on the poor. Despite being occupied in this work, he used to complete one Qur'ān daily. Once he used to complete the *ʿishā salāh*, he would head for the mountains and spend the entire night there.

Statements

1. He used to say this very often: "O Allāh! Either bestow me with Your *maʿrifat* (cognition) and consciousness, or cause this mountain to fall on me. I do not wish to live without Your *maʿrifat* and consciousness."

2. He relates: “When I entered Makkah, I saw a few pious elders sitting near the Maqām-e-Ibrāhīm. I also went and sat near them. A *qārī* read *Bismillāhir Ra<u>h</u>mānir Ra<u>h</u>īm*. My heart was overcome by emotion and I screamed out. The elders said to the *qārī*: ‘Remain silent, do not read now.’ They turned to me and said: ‘O young man! What happened to you? The *qārī* has not really started to read as yet, and you are making a noise!?’ I replied: ‘The entire heavens and earth are standing because of this name. Everything else is living because of this name. It is sufficient to listen to *Bismillāh* alone.’”

“On hearing this, all these elders stood up, seated me among them, and accorded me a lot of respect and honour.”

3. “I used to make this *duʿā’* constantly: ‘O my Allāh! Bestow my heart with *maʿrifat* or take my life away because I have no need for my life if I do not have Your *maʿrifat*.’ I then saw a dream in which someone was saying to me: ‘If you really want this, you must fast for one month and not speak to anyone during this period. You must then come to the zam zam well ask for your need.’ I did as I was told, at the expiry of one month I went to zam zam and made a *duʿā’*. I heard a voice from the well saying to me:

يَا ابْنَ يُوْسُفَ! اِخْتَرْ مِنَ الأَمْرَيْنِ وَاحِدًا أَيَّهُمَا، أَحَبُّ إِلَيْكَ، اَلْعِلْمَ مَعَ الْغِنَى وَالدُّنْيَا، أَمِ الْمَعْرِفَةَ مَعَ الْقِلَّةِ وَالْفَقْرِ.

"O son of Yūsuf! Choose one of the two which is more beloved to you: (1) external knowledge with affluence and the world, (2) maʿrifat with paucity and poverty."

I replied:

الْمَعْرِفَةَ مَعَ الْقِلَّةِ وَالْفَقْرِ

"Maʿrifat with paucity and poverty."

I want the *maʿrifat* of Allāh *taʿālā* with little wealth and poverty.

A voice from the well said:

قَدْ أُعْطِيْتَ قَدْ أُعْطِيْتَ

"You have been given this, you have been given this."

It is said that Shaykh Junayd *quddisa sirruhu* also acknowledged his merits and virtues. Shaykh Junayd *quddisa sirruhu* had written a letter to Shaykh ʿAlī ibn Sahl Asfahānī *rahimahullāh* in which he said: "You must ask your shaykh: 'What is prevailing over you?'" So Shaykh ʿAlī ibn Sahl *rahimahullāh* posed this question to his shaykh who dictated the following reply to his attendant:

اَللّٰهُ غَالِبٌ عَلٰى أَمْرِهِ

"Allāh prevails over His affairs." (Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 21)

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Demise

He passed away in 206 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah*, vol. 10, p. 132)

Hadrat Yazīd ibn Hārūn *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Yazīd and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Khālid. His original place of residence was Wāsit (in Iraq). He was a slave of the Banū Aslam and was therefore known as Aslamī. He was also known as Wāsitī because his hometown was Wāsit. He was born in this town in 118 A.H.

Education and training

He spent a major portion of his life in Wāsit, and most probably received his primary education there. At the time, those who had attended the classes of Imām Shuʿbah ibn al-Hajjāj and Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* had established their classes in Wāsit. After studying under them, Yazīd ibn Hārūn travelled to other regions and tried to study under every scholar.

It is said that the reason for going out of Wāsit was that it had become extremely difficult to develop acumen in knowledge and virtue because of those who were jealous of him. It is a fact that anyone who remained there could not distinguish himself as a scholar. The narrator says: "I asked him: 'Even you could not become a senior *ʿālim* while living in Wāsit!?' He replied: 'Yes.'"

مَا عَرِفْتُ حَتَّى خَرَجْتُ مِنْ وَاسِطَ

"I too could not gain recognition until I went out of Wāsit."

Merits

Although he enjoyed a lofty position in *fiqh*, his distinguishing excellence was in the field of Hadīth. He undoubtedly acquired extraordinary perfection in this regard. He is also a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Abstinence and worship

Together with knowledge and acumen, he possessed the qualities of abstinence, piety, worship, and spiritual exercises to the level of perfection. He used to perform salāh with absolute humility and submission. He used to tremble all the time out of Allāh's fear. Ahmad ibn Nisān says: "I did not see any *ʿālim* who performed salāh in a better manner than Yazīd ibn Hārūn. When he used to stand up for salāh, it seemed as though he was a pillar which was dug in its place without any perception and movement."

When he had the time, he would occupy himself in optional salāh between the *maghrib* and *ʿishā salāhs* and *zuhr* and *ʿasr salāhs*. In that era. Yazīd ibn Hārūn and Haysham *rahimahumallāh* were both well-known for their lengthy salāhs.

ʿĀsim ibn ʿAlī relates: "Yazīd ibn Hārūn and I remained with Ibn ar-Rabīʿ *rahimahullāh* for some time. During this period, I noticed Yazīd ibn Hārūn performing his *fajr salāh* with the *wudū'* of *ʿishā salāh*. He used to spend the entire night standing up in salāh."

He was so overcome by the fear of Allāh *taʿālā* that his eyes used to remain moist all the time. This resulted in his losing his eyesight. He says:

ذهب بهما بكاء الأسحار (تهذيب التهذيب، ج١، ص٣٦٩)

"Crying at pre-dawn took my eyesight away."

Enjoining good and forbidding evil

The enthusiasm to enjoin good and forbid evil was common during the eras of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and Tābiʿīn. Yazīd ibn Hārūn *rahimahullāh* was also a physical manifestation of it. Even a powerful caliph like Ma'mūn used to be fearful of him in this regard.

Muhammad ibn Ahmad *rahimahullāh* narrates from his grandfather who said: "Yazīd ibn Hārūn *rahimahullāh* was from among those personalities who made enjoining good and forbidding evil the purpose of their life."

Demise

He passed away in 206 A.H. in Wāsit. He was 88 years old at the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 9, *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 2, p. 432)

Hadrat Hudhayfah ibn Qatādah Marʿashī *rahimahullāh*

Name, merits

His name is Hudhayfah, his father's name is Qatādah, and he hails from Marʿash.

He is from among the *auliyā'* of his time. He remained in the company of Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh* and also narrated from him.

An example to be followed

One of his friends, Yūsuf ibn Asbāt, said: "I heard Hudhayfah saying: 'If I come to know that a certain person dislikes me and is antagonistic towards me for the sake of Allāh *taʿālā*, I impose love for him upon my self." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 9, p. 283)

Note: Look at his sincerity and honesty – he would even love the person who was his opponent and his enemy. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* describes this as follows: "I love the entire garden, not the flowers alone. I even love the thorns with all my heart."

But look at our egotism – we are not even prepared to listen to the truth when it is said against us. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Statements

1. "If you do not fear being punished by Allāh *taʿālā* for even your best deeds, you will be destroyed."

Note: In other words, we should not even rely on our good deeds. Instead, we should always be trembling and fearful because we do not know whether Allāh *taʿālā* approves of them or not.

2. "I consider a person remaining in his house to be the most superior of good deeds. Had there been any excuse for not going out for the *fard salāhs*, I would not have come out of my house."

Note: Unfortunately, today there are trials and tribulations all around us. May Allāh *taʿālā* safeguard us.

Demise

He passed away in 207 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 252)

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Zubayr Humaydī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bakr, and his father's name is Zubayr. Imām Humaydī *rahimahullāh* was of pure Arab descent. He was born in the pure land of Makkah Muʿazzamah and passed away there. He was from the Banū Humayd which was a branch of the famous Quraysh family, Asad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā.

Merits

Imām Humaydī was from those scholarly Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn who not only lit the lamps of knowledge and practice, but also embellished them with the jewels of paper and pen [i.e. he was an author as well]. His *magnum opus*, the *Musnad Humaydī*, is considered to be from among the oldest and authoritative treasures of Hadīth. A cautious *muhaddith* like Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* starts his collection with his narration. Together with special acumen in Hadīth, Imām Humaydī was fully proficient in *fiqh* and issuing of *fatāwā*. His academic achievements gave him the title of *ʿĀlim Ahl Makkah* (the *ʿālim* of Makkah).

He developed a special expertise in *fiqh* from Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh*. When the latter went to Egypt, Imām Humaydī accompanied him. In this way, he was privy to many of the *ijtihād* of Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh*. He returned to Makkah when his shaykh passed away in Egypt.

Achievements

Abstinence, asceticism, purity and righteousness are the glittering aspects of his life. He was an ardent follower of the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

There is a short booklet titled *Usūl as-Sūnnah* (*The Principles of the Sunnah*), written by Imām Humaydī *rahimahullāh*. We quote a few principles and beliefs from this book:

> "According to us, the established Sunnah is that man must have full *īmān* and conviction in the good, evil, sweet, and bitter things which have been decreed by predestination (*taqdīr*). He must believe that every comfort and calamity occurs according to the decision of Allāh *taʿālā*."

He writes with regard to *īmān*:

> "It refers to words and actions, in which there can be an increase and a decrease. Words without actions are useless. And words and actions without intention are not beneficial. In the same way, if words, actions and intention are all present, but there is no emulation of the Sunnah, then there is no benefit in this also."

He says:

> "Having respect for the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* is most essential. Every believer

ought to continually make *istighfār* (seek forgiveness) and *duʿā* for them. This is because Allāh *taʿālā* says in the Qur'ān:

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاءُوْا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِيْنَ سَبَقُوْنَا بِالإِيْمَانِ

"And those who came after them, say: 'O our Sustainer! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith." (Sūrah al-Hashr, 59: 10)

This verse orders Muslims to make *istighfār* for the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. Anyone who speaks ill of them has deviated from the Sunnah, and such a person will not receive from the spoils of war."

Note: Unfortunately, there are some "educated" people who – according to their opinions - criticize and vilify any Sahābī they like. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Demise

He passed away in Rabīʿ al-Awwal 219 A.H. in his hometown of Makkah. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 9, p. 236)

Hadrat Ādam ibn Abī Iyās *rahimahullāh*

Name and birth

His name was Ādam and his *kunnīyyat* was Abul Hasan. He was born in 132 A.H. He was a resident of Marw (in Khurāsān), but was brought up in Baghdad. After achieving excellence in knowledge and virtue, he shifted to ʿAsqalān and lived there permanently. He is a Tabaʿ Tābiʿī.

Journeys for knowledge

He spent his entire life devoted to knowledge. He travelled to Kūfah, Basra, the Hijāz and Shām and studied under the expert scholars of these places. He had the honour of being a special student of the imām of the time, Shuʿbah ibn al-Hajjāj *rahimahullāh.*

Merits

His proficiency was not confined to knowledge, rather, he also enjoyed a high position as regards asceticism, worship, self-control and memory. Imām Shuʿbah *rahimahullāh* had seven *ʿulamā'* who used to record and note his narrations. Hadrat Ādam ibn Abī Iyās was the most distinguished of them. Hāfiz Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* refers to him as: *al-muhaddith, al-imām az-zāhid* (the erudite Hadīth scholar, the imām, the ascetic).

Worship and following the Sunnah

Together with seniority in knowledge, he was an embodiment of rectitude and piety. Ibn ʿImād *raḫimahullāh* writes: "He was a righteous and obedient servant of Allāh *taʿālā*." Khaṯīb Baghdādī *raḫimahullāh* writes:

كان أحد عباد الله الصالحين

"He was one of the righteous servants of Allāh taʿālā."

ʿAjalī writes: "He was an excellent servant of Allāh *taʿālā*." ʿAllāmah Ibn Jauzī *raḫimahullāh* refers to him as a righteous person and follower of the Sunnah. Ibn Abī Iyās *raḫimahullāh* was a true example of a follower of the Sunnah. Every action of his was moulded according to the Sunnah. Khaṯīb *raḫimahullāh* writes:

كان آدم مشهورا بالسنة شديدَ التمسك بها

"Ādam was well-known as a person who used to adhere strictly to the Sunnah."

His view on "the creation of the Qur'ān"

The caliphates of Ma'mūn and Muʿtaṡim were notorious for the tribulation surrounding the belief concerning "the creation of the Qur'ān". This tribulation started two years before the demise of Ibn Abī Iyās. He was in ʿAsqalān which was very far from the capital of the caliphate, so he remained protected against this tribulation. But his view in this regard was very clear. In fact,

he was so firm in his opposition to it that he did not like to offer *salām* to or reply to the *salām* of those who held such a belief.

Note: Just as *al-hubb fillāh* (love solely for Allāh's sake) is a special attribute of a believer, in like manner, *al-bughd lillāh* (dislike and hatred solely for Allāh's sake) is also a special feature of a believer. However, much confusion takes place between pride and *bughd lillāh*. One has to tread very carefully in this regard, as was the practice of our pious elders.

Abū Bakr Aʿyun relates an incident of this nature. He says: "I went from Baghdad to ʿAsqalān and presented myself before Ibn Abī Iyās. I said to him: 'Abdullāh ibn Sālih, the scribe of Layth ibn Saʿd, conveys *salām* to you.' He replied: 'Do not convey a reply to his *salām* on my behalf.' I asked: 'Why? What has he done?' He said: 'Because he believes in *khalq al-Qur'ān* (the created nature of the Qur'ān).'"

The narrator continues: "When I conveyed to him Ibn Sālih's remorse, regret, and retraction [from the above belief], Ibn Abī Iyās said: 'You may now convey my *salām* to him.'"

Note: This is how sincere and genuine our pious elders were.

The above narrator continues: "After staying over in ʿAsqalān for a few days, I made preparations to return to Baghdad. So Ibn Abī Iyās said to me:

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‘After conveying my *salām* to Ahmad ibn Hambal, you must say to him: ‘You are going through a severe tribulation; you must make it a means of gaining proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*. Without doubt, you are presently standing at the gate of Paradise.’ You must also convey this Hadīth to him on my behalf. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

من أراد بكم على معصية الله فلا تطيعوه

“If anyone wants you to disobey Allāh taʿālā, do not obey him.”

The narrator continues: “I went and met Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal in the Baghdad prison and conveyed Ibn Abī Iyās’s message and Hadīth to him. On hearing it, he lowered his head for a short while and said:

رحمه الله حيا وميتا، فلقد أحسن النصيحة

“May Allāh taʿālā shower mercy on him while he is alive and also when he passes away. He gave me excellent advice.”

Demise

He passed away in Jumādā al-Ukhrā 220 A.H. in ʿAsqalān. This was during the caliphate of Muʿtasim Billāh ʿAbbāsī. He was 88 years old at the time of his death. Abū ʿAlī Maqdisī *rahimahullāh* says: “When his time of death approached, he made one completion of the

Qur'ān, and addressed death by saying: 'I had been waiting for the severity of this day, and looking out for your approach.' He then said *Lā ilāha illallāh*, and his soul departed from him." To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. (*Taba' Tābi'īn*, vol. 2, p. 16)

Hadrat Yahyā ibn Maʿīn *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Yahyā, his *kunnīyyat* is Abu Zakarīyyā, and his father's name is Maʿīn. He was born in 151 A.H. His birthplace was in an area called Nuqyā which was one of the suburbs of Baghdad. He is listed among the academic Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn.

Acquisition of knowledge

After completing his primary education, he devoted all his attention to learning the science of Hadīth. He spent all his wealth and life for this purpose.

Khatīb Baghdādī says that Hadrat Yahyā ibn Maʿīn spent the entire amount of 150 000 dirhams which he received as inheritance from his father for the acquisition of the science of Hadīth. After spending all this money, he became so poor that he did not even have shoes to wear.

His main contribution

Narrating the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was a serious responsibility. Until the era of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*, there were many legal and moral restrictions, and so, every person could not have the courage to narrate Ahādīth.

When any new Hadīth was mentioned before Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, he would go to

the extent of asking senior Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* to testify. Together with these legal restrictions, the importance of narrating Ahādīth and the responsibilities which were attached to it were generally borne in mind during the era of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. Based on the seriousness of this responsibility, some senior Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* used to abstain from narrating Ahādīth out of fear of attributing something incorrect to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

As a result of these legal and moral restrictions, very few people had the courage to narrate Ahādīth. But later on, neither did the legal restrictions remain, nor were the previous moral obligations have any effect. Moreover, narrators of Hadīth were viewed with honour and respect in the society. This is why many unqualified people assumed positions of authority together with qualified and proficient scholars so that they could also get a share of this honour and respect. These unqualified people began narrating Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with total irresponsibility. Especially materialistic orators and story tellers who wanted to raise the emotions of their audience began relating numerous narrations which were not verified.

Consequently, many incorrect narrations or authentic narrations but narrated incorrectly, became rife among the academics and the masses. This was a tribulation which had to be ended immediately or else it would have

disastrous consequences. The government of the time could have suppressed this tribulation easily, but it was not sufficiently concerned about it.

The *ummah* of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* can never forget the favours of the *ʿulamā'* and *muhaddithīn* who – through their Allāh-bestowed intelligence and insight – timeously understood the seriousness of this tribulation, and took the courage and pluck to come onto the field to combat it. This task had commenced towards the end of the first century, but the *muhaddithīn* of the second century – with Hadrat Yahyā ibn Maʿīn *rahimahullāh* at the forefront – laid down the foundations for a new science and thereby shut off this tribulation to a great extent. This science is known as *Asmā' ar-Rijāl* (biographies of the narrators). They laid down certain principles and rules for the transmission (*sanad*) of a Hadīth, and instituted certain criteria for the lives and character of the narrators. Those who fulfilled the criteria would have their narrations accepted, while the narrations of those who did not fulfil the criteria will be rejected.

However, merely laying down principles and rules could not put a complete end to this tribulation. There was a need to study each and every narration and its narrator of those suspect narrators whose narrations had already become popular among the masses. They had to ascertain how much of the narration is authentic and how much is not. Is the narrator responsible or not?

Obviously, this was no easy task. Apart from extraordinary intelligence, insight and strong memory; it needed extraordinary affinity with, and passion for, the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

The personalities whom Allāh *taʿālā* enabled to undertake this important task were blessed with extraordinary memories together with intelligence and insight. Stories about their memories leave us astounded. One important personality from among them was Hadrat Yahyā ibn Maʿīn *rahimahullāh*. Details concerning his amazing efforts and endeavours in this regard are as follows:

He devoted his entire mental and practical powers to differentiate between authentic and unauthentic narrations, and to study the lives and character of the narrators. He would record a single Hadīth fifty times so that he could gauge its shortcomings and defects.

He would also record the narrations of the orators and false narrators so that the authentic aspects of their narrations could be siphoned from their unauthentic narrations. He says:

> "I record the narrations of liars, place them in an oven, and take out cooked *rotīs* from them."

In other words, I assess the narrations on the criteria of narration and intellect, accept what is authentic from them, expound on those which are

unauthentic, and remove the latter from being a Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

ʿAjalī *rahimahullāh* was himself an imām in this field. He relates: "Many adulterated and mixed Ahādīth used to be brought to Ibn Maʿīn, and he would explain the status of each one."

Errors which could not be identified by many senior imāms of Hadīth would be identified by Ibn Maʿīn in the first glance. Abū Saʿīd Haddād relates: "When we used to go to any *muhaddith*, we used to accept whatever Ahādīth were recorded in his books, assuming them to be authentic. But when the same narrations were presented to Ibn Maʿīn, he would immediately recognize the errors. The errors used to be so intricate that had he not pointed them out to us, we would not have perceived them."

Although he was extremely cautious in accepting a narration, when he saw an error in a narrator, he would try to conceal it until the person himself acknowledges his mistake. If the person did not acknowledge it, Ibn Maʿīn would make it public, and not accept any other narration from the person. He writes:

> "When I see an error in a person, I conceal it and desire for him to realize his mistake in a nice and amiable way. At times I meet a narrator and make out from his face that he does not like his error to be exposed. So I explain it to him. If he accepts his mistake, I

keep it between us. If he does not accept, I classify him as a *matrūk* (one whose narrations should be disregarded)."

Demise

The imām had performed hajj on several occasions. It was his practice to spend some time in Madīnah Munawwarah after the hajj. He was blessed with the last opportunity of performing hajj in 233 A.H. As was his habit, he proceeded for Madīnah Munawwarah after the hajj. After visiting the sanctified place of the beloved Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he was destined to remain in the eternal neighbourhood of the master. So he stayed over for a few more days, and passed away shortly thereafter. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

When news of his demise spread in Madīnah, large crowds of people rushed to attend his funeral. The greatest honour which he was bestowed with was that his body was carried in the same box in which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was carried. When his body was being carried, people in general were making this statement: "This is the man who had been safeguarding the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* against false narrations." He was buried in Jannatul Baqīʿ - the graveyard in which thousands of great personalities are buried. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Siyar Sahābah*, vol. 7, *Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn*, vol. 1, p. 366)

Hadeeth and Sunnah Publications

Good fortune and glad tidings

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, you have been studying the eloquent statements and lofty conditions of the pious elders and personalities of the *khayr al-qurūn* (best of eras). This must have certainly been a source of increase in recognition of Allāh *taʿālā* and strengthening of your bond with Him.

Reading about their worship, spiritual exercises, concern for the Hereafter, efforts and striving for the rectification and reformation of the *ummah* gives us considerable cause to be ashamed of our own condition and shortcomings in our actions. We feel – from within our hearts – a concern and desire for reformation, and we make a *duʿā* from our hearts by saying: "O Allāh! Rectify and reform our hearts. Enable us to practise on the teachings and instructions of these pious personalities, and inspire us to convey them to the *ummah*. Āmīn.

I express my gratitude to Allāh *taʿālā* for having inspired me to present the statements and conditions of these pure personalities to the *ummah* – all of which have been well received by the masses and scholars. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this small contribution through His grace and kindness. Āmīn.

In the following pages I will present the statements, conditions and character of the *auliyā', ʿulamā'* and other righteous people and reformers of the centuries after the *khayr al-qurūn*. *Inshā Allāh*, studying them will also fill the *ummah* with religious and spiritual food and medication.

Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* glad tidings for those who will come after the *khayr al-qurūn*

The following Hadīth is quoted with regard to these people:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَثَلُ أُمَّتِيْ مَثَلُ الْمَطَرِ لَا يَدْرِيْ أَوَّلُهُ خَيْرٌ أَمْ آخِرُهُ. (رواه الترمذي)

Anas radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "The similitude of my ummah is like rain, it is not known whether the rain which falls at the beginning is beneficial or the one which falls at the end."

Sometimes, rain which falls at the beginning is beneficial, and sometimes the one that falls at the end is beneficial. No one knows which one is more blessed. The same applies to the merits of the *ummah* of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Partial virtue for the latter part of the *ummah* is contained in this Hadīth, while total virtue is affirmed for the *qurūn mash-hūd lahā bil khayr* (the early eras for which good has been affirmed). It is stated in *Mazāhir-e-Haqq* that the

gist of this is that no era of the *ummah* of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* will be devoid of good. For example, in another Hadīth, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* referred to the entire *ummah* as *ummat-e-marhūmah* (the *ummah* which is showered with Allāh's mercy). And this is because the Nabī (Prophet) of this *ummah* is *Nabī-e-Rahmat* (the Prophet of Mercy).

On the other hand, other nations enjoyed good only at the beginning, and evil crept into the latter generations. Evil came into them because they went to the extent of altering their heavenly-revealed books, caused fabrications in them, and in this way changed the very essence of the religion on which the first generations were.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* also said:

عَنْ أَبِيْ سَعِيْدِ الْخُدْرِيِّ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رُسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ أَكَلَ طَيِّبًا وَعَمِلَ فِيْ سُنَّةٍ وَأَمِنَ النَّاسُ بَوَائِقَهُ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ، فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللهِ إِنَّ هَذَا اَلْيَوْمَ لَكَثِيْرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ، قَالَ وَسَيَكُوْنُ فِيْ قُرُوْنِ بَعْدِيْ (رواه الترمذي)

Hadrat Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrīyy radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "The person who eats lawful sustenance, acts in accordance with the Sunnah, and people remain safe from his mischief; shall enter Paradise." A man said: 'O Rasūlullāh! There are many people like this today." Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "There will also be people like this after me (who will do these good deeds and enter Paradise)."

Just ponder! What a great glad tiding for us. May Allāh *taʿālā* make us all eligible for it.

There will always be a group which will be assisted by Allāh *taʿālā*

عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ قُرَّةَ عَنْ أَبِيْهِ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا فَسَدَ أَهْلُ الشَّامِ فَلَا خَيْرَ فِيْكُمْ، وَلَا يَزَالُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِيْ مَنْصُوْرِيْنَ لاَ يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُمْ حَتَّى تَقُوْمَ السَّاعَةُ، قَالَ ابْنُ الْمَدِيْنِي هُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْحَدِيْثِ (رواه الترمذي) وَقَالَ هَذَا حَدِيْثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيْحٌ

Muʿāwiyah ibn Qurrah narrates from his father that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "Once the people of Shām become corrupt, there will be no good in you. A group from my ummah will always be assisted [by Allāh taʿālā]. Those who try to disgrace them will not be able to harm them until the Resurrection." Ibn al-Madīnī said: "They are the people of Hadīth."

The reader is therefore advised to carefully study the statements, teachings, conditions and states of these latter *auliyā'*, and to mould his inner and outer self in their mould so that he may enjoy success in this world and the Hereafter, and be blessed with Allāh's pleasure and happiness. I make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* to inspire me, all my family members, and all my associates to act on these internal and external teachings and guidelines. Āmīn.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Ilāhābādī
17 Dhū al-Hijjah 1431 A.H.
Dār al-Maʿārif al-Islāmīyyah, Ilāhābād.

قال الله تعالى

وَاللّٰهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ (سورة الجاثية)

THE AULIYĀ' KIRĀM
RAHIMAHUMULLĀH

Short biographies and statements of the Prophets, Sahābah, Sahābiyāt, Tābiʿīn, Tābiʿāt and Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn have already been written. We are now writing the biographies and statements of those *auliyā'* who held a distinguished position as regards asceticism, piety, abundance remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*, and spiritual strength. And who were firm in adhering to the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to emulate them. Āmīn. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

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Hadrat Bahlūl al-Majnūn *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Bahlūl, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Wuhayb, and his father's name is ʿAmr as-Sayrafī.

Merits

He is listed among the intelligent ones. Many incidents, rarities, poems, etc. are quoted from him. He was born in Kūfah and grew up there. The caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd and other dignitaries used to go to him and listen attentively to his speeches. In the beginning stages of his life, he used to teach literature to the people and fulfilled the responsibilities of education and purification. But towards the latter part of his life he began experiencing whisperings which increased gradually and conveyed him towards lunacy. This is why he is referred to as al-Majnūn (a lunatic, mad man). (*al-Aʿlām*, vol. 2, p. 77)

Hārūn ar-Rashīd seeks his advice

Hārūn ar-Rashīd happened to meet him on one occasion so he said to him: "I had been desirous of meeting you since quite some time." Bahlūl replied: "But I never had any desire to meet you." Hārūn ar-Rashīd said: "Give me some advice." He said: "What advice can I give you? These palatial homes which belong to people are their very graves."

Note: In other words, what greater advice can you get? Look at these houses, ponder over them, and learn a lesson from them.

Bahlūl added: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! What will your condition be when Allāh *taʿālā* will make you stand before Him and then question you about the smallest of things? When you will be hungry, thirsty, naked; and all those on the field of Resurrection will be looking at you and laughing at you?" On hearing this Hārūn ar-Rashīd began crying to the extent that he began gasping for breath.

He was *mustajāb ad-daʿwāt* (one whose *duʿās* are readily accepted). Hārūn ar-Rashīd sent a gift to him, but he returned it saying: "Return it to those from whom you took it before they demand it from you on the day of Resurrection – a time when you will have nothing with which you could please them." Hārūn ar-Rashīd began crying when he heard this.

His poems

Hadrat Bahlūl *rahimahullāh* used to say these poems:

دع الحرص على الدنيا – وفي العيش لا تطمع

"Give up all greed for this world, and do not have any hopes of living here."

ولا تجمع من المال – فما تدري لمن تجمع

"Do not accumulate wealth because you do not know for whom you are accumulating."

فان الرزق مقسوم – وسوء الظن لا ينفع

"Sustenance has already been distributed [decreed], so there is no benefit in having bad thoughts."

فقير كل ذي حرص – غني كل من يقنع

"Every avaricious person is poor, and every content person is wealthy." (Tabaqāt, p. 58)

Demise

He passed away in 190 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*al-Aʿlām*, vol. 2, p. 77)

Khalīfah Hārūn ar-Rashīd ʿAbbāsī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Hārūn ar-Rashīd, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Jaʿfar, his father's name is Mahdī ibn Mansūr ibn Muhammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdillāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

He was born in 148 A.H. in Rayy. His mother was Khayzrān.

Conditions

Hārūn ar-Rashīd is the fifth of the ʿAbbāsī (Abbasid) caliphs. The Abbasids were the noblest of the Arabs based on the greatness of their family and their noble lineage. Although Hārūn ar-Rashīd was a caliph, he used to frequent the assemblies of the *ʿulamā'* and *ahlullāh* (the close servants of Allāh *taʿālā*). He remained in the companionship of pious luminaries like Fudayl ibn ʿAyād, Ibn Simāk and Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahumullāh*. (*Tārīkh Islam*, vol. 2, p. 344)

We take the honour of quoting whatever the great *muhaddith*, Hadrat Maulānā Habīb ar-Rahmān Sāhib Aʿzamī *rahimahullāh*, wrote in his famous book, *Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*:

Hārūn ar-Rashīd became the caliph in 170 A.H. after his brother, Hādī ʿAbbās. He was a renowned caliph and a legendary ruler. He was very handsome and striking, very eloquent in

speech, and also influential in the sciences and literature. While having the wealth and comforts of this world available to him, he was concerned about the Hereafter and feared Allāh *taʿālā*. He used to perform 100 *rakʿats* of optional salāh daily, and give 1 000 dirhams in charity daily from his income. He was very appreciative of knowledge and scholars, and loved them. He used to take due consideration of the sanctity and inviolability of the *shaʿā'ir al-Islam* (the salient features of Islam). He could not tolerate listening to any objections against the Qur'ān and Hadīth. He would personally attend the assemblies of the pious elders, listen to their words of advice with all his heart, and break down crying. Based on these excellent qualities, Hadrat Fudayl *rahimahullāh* used to say: "People dislike him but there is no one more beloved to me than him in this entire world."

He used to accord a lot of respect to the *ʿulamā'*. Ibn as-Simāk Wāʿiz went to his court one day, and he accorded him the utmost respect. Ibn as-Simāk said to him: "Your humility despite possessing so much of honour is the greatest honour." He then gave him some words of advice, and Hārūn cried profusely.

Abū Muʿāwiyah *rahimahullāh* relates: "Whenever I narrated a Hadīth to Hārūn ar-Rashīd, he would certainly say: *'sallallāhu ʿalā sayyidī'* (salutations to my master)."

Muʿāwiyah, the *muhaddith*, *rahimahullāh* joined Hārūn ar-Rashīd for a meal. When he completed the meal, he went to have his hands washed. Hārūn ar-Rashīd asked him: "Do you know who is washing your hands?" Muʿāwiyah *rahimahullāh* was blind, so he said: "I do not know." Hārūn ar-Rashīd said: "I am washing your hands out of respect for the knowledge which you possess."

His excellent qualities

The scholars have given much importance to his excellent qualities. When Imām ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Mubārak *rahimahullāh* passed away and Hārūn ar-Rashīd received this news, he held an assembly of consolation, and he ordered the courtiers and seniors of the government to encourage him to remain patience on the demise of Ibn al-Mubārak *rahimahullāh*.

The historians write that he would go for jihād one year and for hajj the next year. When he used to go for hajj, he used to take 100 people from among the *fuqahā'* (jurists) and their children. The year in which he would not go for hajj, he would send 300 people for hajj after providing them with sufficient provisions and money for the journey.

He goes to Hadrat Fudayl *rahimahullāh* for advice

Abū Nuʿaym quotes in his *Hilyah* and Ibn al-Jauzī quotes in his *Sifatus Safwah* that Hārūn ar-Rashīd went out at night with Hadrat Fadal ibn Rabīʿ *rahimahullāh*, and the two went to Ibn

ʿUyaynah and ʿAbd ar-Razzāq. He then proceeded to the house of Hadrat Fudayl ibn ʿAyād *rahimahullāh* and knocked on his door. Fudayl was in salāh at the time and was repeating a certain verse. When he completed, he asked: "Who is there?" He received the reply: "It is the Amīr al-Mu'minīn." Fudayl asked: "What do I have to do with him?" He replied: "Is it not necessary for you to obey him?" Fudayl opened the door, immediately went to the upper floor, put off the lamp, and sat down in one corner. When Hārūn and Fadal reached upstairs, they began searching for him. Hārūn's hand happened to touch him, so Fudayl said: "This hand is so soft and weak. I wonder if it will be protected against Allāh's punishment tomorrow."

Hārūn said: "We have come for a work, you may commence." Hadrat Fudayl said: "When ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* received the caliphate, he summoned for Sālim ibn ʿAbdillāh, Muhammad ibn Kaʿb and Rajā' ibn Hayāt, and said to them: 'I have been caught up in this test [of becoming the caliph]. Give me some good advice.' Look, he referred to the caliphate as a test, while you and your friends consider it to be a bounty. Anyway, listen further...Hadrat Sālim said to ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz: 'If you would like to safeguard yourself against Allāh's punishment, you must consider the seniors and elders to be your fathers, the middle-aged people to be your brothers, and the youngsters to be your children. Thus, you will have to show respect to your

fathers, be kind to your brothers, and show mercy to your children.'"

"Rajā' said: 'If you want to protect yourself from Allāh's punishment, you will have to like for the Muslims what you like for yourself, and dislike for them what you dislike for yourself.'"

Hadrat Fudayl continues: "I am saying to you [O Hārūn] that I am extremely fearful about your well-being on the day of Resurrection. Tell me, do you have any advisors like them [like the advisors of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz]?" On hearing this, Hārūn ar-Rashīd was completely overcome, he cried profusely until he lost consciousness.

Rabī' relates: "On seeing this condition, I said to Fudayl: 'Have mercy on the Amīr al-Mu'minīn, and be a bit lenient to him.' Hadrat Fudayl replied: 'Yes, yes, you and your friends will take away his life, and I must be lenient to him?'"

When Hārūn ar-Rashīd regained his consciousness, he said: "May Allāh *ta'ālā* have mercy on you, give me more advice." Hadrat Fudayl said: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* uncle, Hadrat 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* once said to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*: 'Appoint me as a governor to some place.' Rasūlullāh replied: 'Leadership will be a cause of remorse and regret on the day of Resurrection. So as far as possible, do not become a governor of any place.'"

Hārūn ar-Rashīd cried profusely when he heard this, and said after some time: “May Allāh *taʿālā* have mercy on you, give me more advice.” Hadrat Fudayl said: “O handsome-faced man! Allāh *taʿālā* will certainly question you on the day of Resurrection about the creation. If you want to save your face from the fire of Hell, do not allow any day or night to pass wherein any of your subjects has any ill-feeling or complaint against you. If any of their hearts have any ill-feeling towards you, you will not even get the fragrance of Paradise, as is mentioned in a Hadīth.”

Hārūn ar-Rashīd started to cry again. He asked after some time: “Does anyone have any claim against you?” Fudayl said: “Yes, Allāh *taʿālā* has many claims against me.” Hārūn ar-Rashīd said: “I am not asking you about that, I am asking about people [having claims against you, or to whom you owe something].” Fudayl said: “Allāh *taʿālā* did not command me to do this. Rather, He commanded me to have firm belief in His oneness, to attest to it, and to obey His orders. Allāh *taʿālā* said:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ. مَا أُرِيْدُ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ رِّزْقٍ وَّمَآ أُرِيْدُ أَنْ يُّطْعِمُوْنَ. إِنَّ اللهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِيْنُ.

“I created jinn and man solely for My worship. I do not want any sustenance from them, nor do I want them to feed Me. Allāh alone is the provider, possessor of mighty power.”

Hārūn ar-Rashīd said: “Very well, here are 1 000 dīnārs, please accept them from me. You can spend this money on your wife and children.” Hadrat Fudayl said: “Glory to Allāh! I am showing the path to salvation, and you are giving me something in return for it!? You may leave. May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you safe and inspire you to piety.”

He did not say anything further. When Hārūn ar-Rashīd left and reached the door, he said to Fadal: “You must bring me to people like him. He is undoubtedly the *sayyid* (chief) of the believers.” In the meantime, one of the women of the house went to Hadrat Fudayl and said: “You know what difficulty and poverty we are experiencing. What would have happened had you taken the money [which he offered]?” Fudayl replied: “Your similitude is like those people who had a camel. As long as the camel had the strength, they would make it work and earn money through it. But when the camel got old, they slaughtered it and ate it.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent story which is worthy of remembering because it contains advice for the *ʿulamāʾ* and rulers alike. The *ʿulamāʾ* used to advise the rulers with harsh words without hesitation. The rulers and kings used to accept their advice happily. The *ʿulamāʾ* and the rulers were both admirable.

We must make *duʿā* that Allāh *taʿālā* creates such *ʿulamāʾ* and rulers in this country as well so that

the corrupt system of the world may be set right, and the world is transformed into a paradise. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

The historians have quoted many incidents from the different hajj journeys of Hārūn ar-Rashīd. One admonitory story from among the many stories is quoted in *Tārīkh Kāmil*. Hārūn ar-Rashīd entered the Kaʿbah one day. Those who were in-charge of the keys of the Kaʿbah noticed him making *duʿā* while standing on his hands.

Demise

Hārūn ar-Rashīd passed away in the Khurāsānī city of Tūs (Mash-had) in 193 A.H. and was buried there. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 214)

Hadrat Mansūr ibn ʿAmmār al-Wāʿiz *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Mansūr, his *kunnīyyat* is Abus Surā, and his father's name is ʿAmmār.

Merits

He is from the first level of *mashā'ikh*. He was a resident of Marw and then settled down in Basra. He was an eloquent orator. Ahmad ibn al-Hawārī narrates: I heard ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Mutrif saying: "Mansūr ibn ʿAmmār was seen in a dream after he passed away. He was asked about how he fared by Allāh *taʿālā*, so he replied: 'Allāh *taʿālā* pardoned me and said to me: 'O Mansūr! I pardoned you despite your many ups and downs. I pardoned you because you used to assemble people for My *dhikr*.'"

Note: This shows that assembling people for Allāh's *dhikr* earns Allāh's pleasure. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us all to do this rewarding work.

A drought

Mansūr ibn ʿAmmār relates: "When people were experiencing a drought, I went to Egypt. The people performed the *jumuʿah salāh* and everyone made *duʿā* by crying before Allāh *taʿālā*. An idea came into my heart so I went into the courtyard of the musjid. I addressed the people saying: 'O people! Gain closeness to Allāh *taʿālā* through

charity and other optional deeds.' I then threw my sheet to the ground and said: 'This is my earning [which I am giving in charity]. Now you people must give something in charity.' The women began placing their bangles and rings [onto the sheet] until it was full. Subsequently, the skies poured down rain on us and the people had to walk through mud. I went to Layth *rahimahullāh* and Ibn Lahīʿah *rahimahullāh*, and they stared at all the wealth. Around the same time, I was walking around the fort of Alexandria, when a person was staring at me. I asked him: 'Why are you staring at me?' He said: 'You were the same person who addressed us on Friday!' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'You have been caught up in a tribulation because people are saying that you are Khadir *ʿalayhis salām* – you just made *duʿā* and it was accepted.' I replied: 'I am merely a sinful servant.'"

Bishr wrote to Mansūr ibn ʿAmmār and asked him about the verse:

اَلرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى

"The most Beneficent, established on the Throne." (Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 5)

He asked him about the *istiwā'* (Allāh *taʿālā* establishing Himself on the Throne). Mansūr ibn ʿAmmār wrote to Bishr: The *istiwā'* of Allāh *taʿālā* is unlimited, giving a reply to your question would certainly involve certain impositions, asking

about it is a *bidʿah*, and *īmān* in it is obligatory." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 8, p. 93)

Statements

1. "Allāh *taʿālā* is most pure who made the hearts of the *ʿārifīn* (those who truly recognize Allāh *taʿālā*) utensils for His *dhikr*, the hearts of worldly people utensils for greed, and the hearts of the poor, utensils for contentment."

2. "I am astonished at the poor who do not leave their brothers for years on end for having committed a mistake, and do not feel that he repented. When they see an oppressor usurping wealth unjustly, they will say it is lawful by merely one wall which could be construed as lawful because he may have changed it with other wealth. But when their brother commits a minor mistake, they do not look for a way out to excuse him by saying that he may have repented, whereas the principle is the same." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 71)

Note: Just as excuses and ruses are resorted to for the repentance of an oppressor, one should look for excuses to overlook the mistakes of one's brother.

3. "The best garment of a servant is humility and submission. Taqwā is the best garment for the *ʿārifīn*. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ

"The garment of piety is best."

4. Some people relate that the reason for his repentance was this: While walking on a road, he found a piece of paper which had *Bismillāhir Rahmānir Rahīm* written on it. He picked it up, could not find any place to keep it, so he ate it. Later he saw a dream in which someone said to him: "Allāh *taʿālā* has opened the doors of wisdom for you because of the respect which you gave to that piece of paper." (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*)

Demise

The author of *Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'* says: "I could not find the year of his demise, but I gauged through other indications that he may have passed away in 200 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 9, p. 93)

Hadrat Abū Mahfūz Maʿrūf ibn Fīroze Karkhī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage birth

His name is Maʿrūf, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Mahfūz, and his father's name is Fīroze. He is known by the title of Karkhī. He was born in Rabīʿ al-Awwal 156 A.H.

Merits

He was from among those *mashā'ikh* who were well known for their asceticism, abstention and courage. He was a *buzurg* (pious personality) whose *duʿās* used to be accepted. People used to stand at his graveside and make *duʿā* for rain. He had lived in the company of Dā'ūd Tā'ī.

Definition of love

A person asked him: "What is love?" He replied: "Love is not learnt by teaching it to people. Rather, it is through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and a gift from him. As long as Allāh *taʿālā* does not bestow it on a person, he does not have the power to acquire it." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 186)

Note: When a person engages in abundant *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā* and is particular about following the Sunnah, Allāh *taʿālā* bestows him with His love through His grace and kindness. And inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

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Statements

1. "When Allāh *taʿālā* wills good for a person, He opens the doors of good deeds for him, and shuts the doors of argumentation and debating. On the other hand, when He wills bad for a person, He shuts the doors of good deeds on him, and opens the doors of argumentation and debating to him."

2. "Had the love of the world not been removed from the hearts of the *ʿārifīn*, they would not have been able to carry out acts of obedience. And if even an iota of love of this world remained in their hearts, even a single *sajdah* (prostration) of theirs would not have been correct."

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us from the temptations of this world. Āmīn.

3. "An *ʿārif* is inclined to the world out of compulsion. As for the one who succumbs to temptation, he turns his attention towards the world by his own choice."

4. "When an *ʿālim* practises on his knowledge, the hearts of the believers are levelled for him [and he is able to influence them towards good]. As for the one who dislikes such a practising *ʿālim*, it is because there is some sickness in his [the person's] heart."

Note: A person who has sicknesses such as jealousy and pride will dislike such an *ʿālim*.

5. “When Allāh *taʿālā* wills good for a person, He distances humiliation and degradation from him, and inspires him to remain in the company of the genuine *fuqarā’* (the poor servants of Allāh *taʿālā*, or His righteous servants). When Allāh *taʿālā* will evil for a person, He makes him ‘paralysed’ from doing good deeds, to the extent that good deeds seem weightier than mountains to him; and He causes him to remain among the wealthy.”

Note: Obviously, when he lives among the wealthy, he will become desirous and greedy for this world. This will continue until he is destroyed.

Demise

He passed away in 200 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 62)

Hadrat Fath ibn ʿAlī Mausalī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Fath, his father's name is ʿAlī, and he is well known as Fath Mausalī. He is from among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Mausal (Iraq), and a contemporary of Hadrat Bishr Hāfī *quddisa sirruhu*.

A guest of Hadrat Bishr Hāfī *rahimahullāh*

He went to Hadrat Bishr Hāfī *rahimahullāh* on one occasion and said: "If you have food, please give some to me." The food was brought, he ate some of it, placed some in his bag, and departed. A young boy was present in the assembly of Hadrat Bishr Hāfī *rahimahullāh*. He was surprised by this action of Shaykh Fath *rahimahullāh* and said to Hadrat Bishr Hāfī: "People say that Shaykh Fath is the imām (leader) of the *mutawakkilīn* (those who place their sole trust in Allāh *taʿālā*), but you saw how he placed some food in his bag and departed!? What type of *tawakkul* is this?" Hadrat Bishr Hāfī said: "He came and taught you that when *tawakkul* reaches the point of perfection, then actions of this nature do not damage it in any way."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how he explained the essence of *tawakkul*.

Shaykh al-Islam *rahimahullāh* says: "When the quality of *tajrīd* (to worship Allāh *taʿālā* without

any ulterior motive) is set right, then even the kingdom of Sulaymān *ʿalayhis salām* appears genuine in the sight of a Sufi. But when *tajrīd* is not correct and incomplete, a person will even perceive the presence of his sleeve which extends beyond his hand."

Demise

He passed away seven years before the demise of Hadrat Bishr Hāfī *rahimahullāh* in 220 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 199)

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Aslam Tūsī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Aslam, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan. He was an imām, *hāfiz*, and a pious servant of Allāh *taʿālā*. He was born around 180 A.H.

Following the Sunnah

Is-hāq ibn Tāriq *rahimahullāh* relates: "In a period of fifty years, I did not see a person more adherent to the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* than Muhammad ibn Aslam." Ahmad ibn Salamah *rahimahullāh* said: "Muhammad ibn Aslam fell ill in the house of one of the residents of Tūs. So he said to the man: 'You must not leave my side at night, because Allāh's *taʿālā* order [for my death] will descend before the morning. When I die, you must not wait for anyone. You must start my burial arrangements immediately.'" (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 12, p. 195)

Note: This was also in accordance with the Sunnah, because Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* ordered us to be swift in the burial arrangements.

When he used to enter his house, he would cry so much that his neighbours would feel sorry for him. When he used to leave his house, he would wash his face and apply *surmah* (antimony) to his

eyes. When he used to go out at night to give charity, he would tie a type of veil over his face so that no one would recognize him.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how concerned he was about sincerity. This is why he used to conceal his charity, abundant worship and spiritual condition. This is an excellent model for the *ummah*. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us all to do this. Āmīn.

Statements

"Follow the *sawād-e-aʿẕam* (the main body of Muslims)." People asked: "Who is meant by them?" He said: "One or two *ʿālims* who hold on firmly to the Sunnah and ways of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It does not refer to the whole body of Muslims. The person who remains with these one or two *ʿālims* and follows them, then this is considered to be a *jamāʿah* (a group of Muslims). The one who opposes them is as if he opposed the *jamāʿah*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent definition of the *sawād-e-aʿẕam*.

He used to conceal his optional deeds. He used to say: "If I could, I would have even concealed them from the two angels [who record our deeds]."

Note: All this shows his intense sincerity.

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Demise

He passed away in 226 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 54)

Hadrat Abū Nasr Bishr ibn Hārith al-Hāfī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Bishr, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Nasr, and his father's name is Hārith. His title is Shaykh al-Islam, and is well-known by the name Hāfī.

Birth

He was born in 152 A.H. He was a resident of Marw and then settled down in Baghdad.

Merits

He was an erudite *ʿālim* and *muhaddith*, and was considered to be an imām and leader. He remained in the company of Hadrat Fudayl ibn ʿAyād *rahimahullāh*, and was a very pious and senior *ʿālim*. He was unique as regards his knowledge and spiritual condition. He travelled for the sake of knowledge and studied under Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* and others.

Statements

1. "The person who desires recognition from people will not experience the sweetness of the Hereafter." This refers to the person who desires his excellent qualities to be made known to people."

2. “There will come a time when foolish and ignoble people will rule over intelligent and noble people.”

3. “Those whose mere mention revives your hearts are sufficient for you. And there are certainly people who, merely looking at them causes the hearts to die.”

4. “Yesterday and the day before have died, today is in the pangs of death, and the day to come has not been born as yet. You should therefore hasten in doing good deeds.”

Note: The above is conveyed as follows:

الماضي لا يذكر، والإستقبال لا ينتظر، والحال يعتبر

“The past is forgotten, the future is not awaited, and it is only the present which is taken into consideration.”

So do as much good deeds you can in the present, and make it as profitable as you can.

5. Muhammad ibn Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* used to say: “I heard a man asking this question to Hadrat Bishr *rahimahullāh*: ‘Relate a Hadīth to me.’ He refused, so the man began begging and pleading to him but he still did not agree. When he lost all hope, he said: ‘O Abū Nasr! When you meet Allāh *taʿālā* on the day of Resurrection and He asks you why you did not relate Hadīth to people, what reply will you give to Him?’ Hadrat Bishr *rahimahullāh* replied: ‘I will say: ‘O my

Allāh! You ordered us to go against our *nafs*. My *nafs* was seeking greatness through relating Hadīth; this is why I went against it and did not accede to his request.'"

Note: Just ponder! Despite being such a senior *ʿālim* and pious personality, he was not heedless of his *nafs* for a single moment. And where he perceived the danger of his *nafs* having a share in a good deed, he abstained from it. There is a powerful lesson for us – it shows how necessary it is for us to be cautious of the involvement of the *nafs*. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us.

6. "The person who has no need for women must choose *taqwā* of Allāh *taʿālā*, and never ever become accustomed to the thighs of women. And if, out of necessity, a person [who has the desire for women], has even four wives, he is not considered to be one who is committing excesses."

7. Some people asked him: "Why do you not get married so that you can come out of the category of going against the Sunnah?" He replied: "I am leaving aside a Sunnah and keeping myself occupied in what is *fard* (compulsory)."

Note: By *fard* he was referring to striving against the *nafs* and purifying it from evil characteristics. In other words, *tazkiyah nafs* (purification of the soul) which is *fard ʿayn* (compulsory) on every person. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

"The one who purified his soul has triumphed."

8. "Remaining in the company of evil people will cause you to have bad thoughts about righteous people. Remaining in the company of righteous people will cause you to have good thoughts about evil people. And Allāh *taʿālā* will not punish His servants for having good thoughts. This is because there is no need to have any proof for good thoughts about a person. On the other hand, Allāh *taʿālā* considers some evil thoughts to be sinful. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ

"Some bad thoughts are sins."

9. When he used to see a poor person laughing and heedless, he would say: "Fear Allāh *taʿālā* that He does not seize you in this condition."

10. "When a person is found wanting in his relationship with Allāh *taʿālā*, then He snatches away from the person the thing to which he is attached." May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 63)

Demise

He passed away on a Friday in Rabīʿ al-Awwal 227 A.H. one year before the demise of the caliph, Muʿtasim Billāh. He lived in this temporary abode

for 75 years. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 10, p. 469)

Hadrat Sa'īd ibn Mansūr "Sāhib as-Sunan" *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Sa'īd, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū 'Uthmān, and his father's name is Mansūr.

Birth and journeys for the sake of knowledge

He was born in Jūzjān in Khurāsān. He spent his childhood in Balkh and commenced his studies there. After reaching the age of maturity, he travelled to distant places to listen to Ahādīth from the famous *muhaddithīn* of the time, and to benefit from them.

Teachers in Hadīth

His famous *shuyūkh* of Hadīth are: Imām Dār al-Hijrah Hadrat Imām Mālik ibn Anas *rahimahullāh*, 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak *rahimahullāh*, Ismā'īl ibn 'Ulayyah *rahimahullāh* and others.

Famous students

His students include the following: Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* (the author of *al-Musnad*), Imām Abū Dā'ūd as-Sijistānī *rahimahullāh* (the author of *as-Sunan*), and Ahmad ibn Najdah ibn al-'Irbān al-Harawī *rahimahullāh*. It is this same Ahmad ibn Najdah who is the narrator of the *Sunan* of Sa'īd ibn Mansūr. There is another *muhaddith* by the name of Muhammad ibn 'Alī ibn Zayd as-Sā'igh

ra<u>h</u>imahullāh who is also a narrator of the *Sunan* of Saʿīd ibn Man<u>s</u>ūr. The printed editions of the his *Sunan* which are in our midst are through the narration of Mu<u>h</u>ammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Zayd. (*Afkār ʿĀlam*, p. 89)

<u>*Kitāb as-Sunan* is an authoritative book</u>

This book was printed for the first time in 1968 C.E. with notes and commentaries by the Mu<u>h</u>addith Jalīl Maulānā <u>H</u>abīb ar-Ra<u>h</u>mān <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*. It was printed under the auspices of Majlis ʿIlmī, Dhābel, district Nausārī (Gujarat, India). This book was originally written towards the end of the second century and beginning of the third century of the *hijrah*.[1]

<u>The opinions of the imāms with regard to his seniority</u>

Maulānā Ni<u>z</u>ām ad-Dīn Asīr Adrawī has quoted the opinions of many senior scholars of the world about the seniority and acumen of <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Saʿīd ibn Man<u>s</u>ūr *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*. We are quoting the opinions of a few elders:

ʿAllāmah Dhahabī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* quoted many statements and opinions of senior *mu<u>h</u>addithīn*, imāms of biographies, and imāms in the field of <u>H</u>adīth assessment and evaluation (*jar<u>h</u> wa taʿdīl*) with regard to the intellectual acumen of Saʿīd ibn Man<u>s</u>ūr *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*. He writes:

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[1] Maulānā Ni<u>z</u>ām ad-Dīn Asīr Adrawī: *Afkār ʿĀlam*, p. 99.

Salamah ibn Shuʿayb relates: “I made mention of Saʿīd ibn Mansūr in the presence of Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh*, so he spoke very highly of him and mentioned his profound academic services.”

The famous *muhaddith*, Abū Hātim Rāzī, says:

هو ثقة المتقين الأثبات ممن جمع وصنف

“He is a reliable person of the pious and resolute who compiled and wrote [books on Hadīth].” (*Tadhkiratul Huffāz* of ʿAllāmah Dhahabī).

Harb al-Kurmānī is included among those who narrated from Saʿīd ibn Mansūr. He relates: “Saʿīd ibn Mansūr dictated 10 000 Ahādīth to us from memory.”

The famous historian of Islam, *muhaddith* and *mufassir*, Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 A.H.) writes in his book *al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah* about Saʿīd ibn Mansūr as follows:

“Saʿīd ibn Mansūr is the famous author of *Kitāb as-Sunan*. Very few people of his era are on par with him as regards his merits and virtues.”

Demise

He passed away in Makkah Mukarramah in 227 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Two *muhaddith* narrate from him

It is gauged from many authentic books of biographies that there are two Hadīth scholars who narrate the *Kitāb as-Sunan* from Saʿīd ibn Mansūr *rahimahullāh*.

ʿAllāmah Dhahabī and Hāfiz Ibn Hajar ʿAsqalānī mention these two by name, they are Ahmad ibn Najdah ibn al-ʿIrbān and the other is Muhammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Zayd as-Sā'igh. The chain of transmission thereafter is from the latter of the two. We are therefore presenting a few facts about him from the books of biographies.

The transmitters

The chain of transmission as quoted at the beginning of the printed edition of *Kitāb as-Sunan* is as follows:

أخبرنا الشيخ الحافظ أبو البركات عبد الوهاب بن المبارك بن أحمد، ابن الأنماطي، قال، أنبانا الثقة أبو طاهر أحمد بن الحسن الباقلاني الكرخي، قال أنبانا أبو علي الحسن بن أحمد بن إبراهيم بن الحسن بن محمد بن شاذان قراءة عليه وأنا أسمع، فقال أخبرنا أبو محمد دعليح السجستاني قال: أخبرنا محمد بن علي بن زيد الصائغ، قال، حدثنا سعيد بن منصور، قال، باب الحث على تعليم الفرائض...إلى آخره.

Maulānā Asīr Adrawī then provides an introduction to the two narrators which we are leaving out for the sake of brevity. He makes mention of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn al-Mubārak at the

end. He writes: "His name is ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Tāhir, and his father's name is Mubārak Baghdādī. He is a teacher of Imām Ibn al-Jauzī *rahimahullāh*. ʿAllāmah Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes about him as follows:

الشيخ الإمام الحافظ المفيد الثقة بقية السلف أبو البركات عبد الوهاب بن المبارك بن أحمد بن الحسن بن بندار البغدادي الأنماطي.

"He is the shaykh, the imām, the hāfiz, the endorsed, trusted and reliable narrator, the last of the salaf (pious predecessors), Abul Barakāt ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn al-Mubārak ibn Ahmad ibn al-Hasan ibn Bandār al-Baghdādī al-Anmāti."

He heard Ahādīth from the following *shuyūkh*: Abū Muhammad as-Sarīfīnī, Abul Hasan ibn an-Nuqūd, Abul Qāsim ibn al-Busrā, Abū Nasr az-Zabītī and others. He also heard Ahādīth from other *shuyūkh*. He was a very pious, ascetic and abstentious man. He had a large treasure of Ahādīth which were personally hand-written by himself. Ibn al-Jauzī *rahimahullāh* describes him as a person who heard authentic Ahādīth, who was a reliable and firm narrator. He relates: "When I used to read Ahādīth to him, he would cry. I received more academic benefit from his crying than from his teaching.[1] I benefited so

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[1] Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to quote this statement in his books: ʿAllāmah Ibn al-Jauzī was apparently considered to be of a dry temperament, and is well-known for

much from him that what I learnt from others appeared to be nothing compared to what I learnt from him. I presented myself in his service during the days when he was completely bed-ridden. He passed away in 11 Muharram 538 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him."

May Allāh *taʿālā* reward Hadrat Maulānā Nizām ad-Dīn Asīr Adrawī for providing us with detailed facts about Saʿīd ibn Mansūr Sāhib as-Sunan *rahimahullāh* in his book, *Afkār ʿĀlam*. He included some details about other *muhaddithīn* as well – details which are extremely important and enlightening.

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disapproving the Sufis, yet his spiritual condition was such that he himself says: "I received more academic benefit from his crying than from his teaching." (Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Ilāhābādī)

Hadrat Abul Hasan Ahmad ibn Abī al-Hawārī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his father's name is Maymūn, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan.

Merits

He is from among the first level of the *mashā'ikh*. He remained in the companionship of Shaykh Abū Sulaymān Dārānī and Abū 'Abdillāh Banājī. His entire family were ardent worshippers and pious people.

Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* used to say: "Ahmad ibn Abī al-Hawārī was the *rayhānah* of Shām." The word *rayhānah* refers to the sweet basil, a very fragrant plant.

Statements

1. "Hadrat Khadir *'alayhis salām* taught me an incantation, and said: 'When you experience any pain, you must place your hand on the spot of the pain and read:

وَبِالْحَقِّ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ وَبِالْحَقِّ نَزَلَ

"We sent it [the Qur'ān] with the truth, and it came down with the truth."

Whenever I read this, the pain disappeared immediately."

2. If anyone became aware of any of his good deeds, he would reprimand his self by saying: "You are extremely unmindful for having allowed others to come to know of your good deeds."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how concerned he was about concealing his condition. This is a sign of extreme sincerity.

3. "This world is a garbage site where dogs assemble. The person who does not distance himself from it is worse than a dog because a dog will take whatever he needs from the garbage and go away. But the person who loves this world does not separate himself from it under any condition." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 224)

4. ʿAllāmah Qushayrī *rahimahullāh* quotes his statement in *Risālah Qushayrīyyah* as follows: "When a person looks at this world with admiration and love, Allāh *taʿālā* removes the effulgence of conviction and abstinence from his heart."

5. "If a person does any act without following the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in it, then his act is useless."

6. "The best crying of a person is when he cries when he did not act in accordance with the Sharīʿah."

7. "Allāh *taʿālā* does not test a person with any thing worse than heedlessness and hard-

heartedness." (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, p. 81)

Note: This proves the reprehensibility of heedlessness of Allāh's *dhikr* and hard-heartedness. We should constantly make *duʿā* for inspiration to engage in abundant *dhikr*. We must remain in the company of a shaykh, practise *dhikr* and develop firmness and perfection in it. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

He passed away in 230 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*)

Hadrat Abū ʿAlī Ahmad ibn ʿĀsim Antākī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his father's name is ʿĀsim, and his *kunnīyyats* are Abū ʿAbdillāh and Abū ʿAlī.

He was an imām, leader and orator of Damascus. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 11, p. 409)

Merits

He was a contemporary of Bishr Hāfī ibn Hārith *rahimahullāh*, Surī Saqatī *rahimahullāh* and Hārith Muhāsibī *rahimahullāh*. He possessed immense insight, and this is why Abū Sulaymān Dārānī *rahimahullāh* named him Jāsūs al-Qalb (the spy of the heart). (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 83)

Statements

1. "When the matter [with Allāh *taʿālā*] reaches the heart, the rest of the body parts experience comfort."

Note: The body parts have to bear hardship for the rectification of the heart. Once the heart is rectified, the rest of the body experiences comfort.

2. "Rectify your present matters and your past sins will be forgiven."

3. “Conviction removes doubt from the heart because the two are opposites, they cannot be together.” (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 11, p. 409)

4. “I do not envy anyone except for the person who has correctly recognized his Creator.”

Note: The *maʿrifat* (true recognition) of Allāh *taʿālā* is undoubtedly enviable. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to acquire His true *maʿrifat*.

5. “I do not want to die until I recognize Allāh *taʿālā* as the *ʿārifīn* recognize Him.”

6. “Keep the world away from yourself and Allāh *taʿālā* will shower you with contentment (i.e. He will bestow you with the quality of contentment), and bless you with His pleasure.” (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 10, p. 487)

7. “I did not think I will experience the time when Islam will return as a stranger once again.” Someone asked him: “Has Islam become a stranger again?” He replied: “Yes, it is certainly like a stranger. If you go to any *ʿālim* in these times, you will find him attracted to the world and desirous of position and leadership. He will be earning through his knowledge and will claim that he has more rights over this world. And if you think of going to an *ʿābid* (ardent worshipper) who is in seclusion in a mountain, you will find him ignorant in his worship, and deluded and deceived by his *nafs* and by Satan. He may have reached the highest level of worship, but he is

ignorant of the most basic, let alone the highest." In other words, he will have *ʿibādat* but no *maʿrifat*."

"The *ʿulamāʾ* and the *ʿābidīn* have all become mountain-eating wild animals, and snatching wolves. Now this is the condition of the *ʿulamāʾ*, the bearers of the Qurʾān, and the guides to wisdom of your time. O people of insight! Take admonition."

8. "When you sit in the company of true *fuqarāʾ* (true ascetics), sit with a true heart because they are spies of the heart – they enter your heart [and learn what is inside]."

Demise

His year of demise is not certain, but he definitely lived until 230 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 10, p. 487)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Hātim ibn ʿUnwān al-Asamm *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Hātim, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, and is well known as Hātim Asamm. His father's name is ʿUnwān. He was from among the early *mashā'ikh* of Balkh in Khurāsān, and remained in the company of Hadrat Shaqīq Balkhī *rahimahullāh*.

An excellent way of rectification

Hadrat Hātim Asamm went to Muhammad ibn Muqātil who was an *ʿālim* of Rayy. He found his house quite large, laid out with carpets, and many slaves and servants moving about. So he did not offer *salām* to him. He said: "O Muhammad! Who have you emulated in building this large house, laying out these carpets, and having all these possessions? Did you emulate Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*, the Tābiʿīn and the righteous imāms; or did you emulate Pharaoh and Namrūd?" Muhammad *rahimahullāh* remained silent. Hātim *rahimahullāh* said: "O you evil *ʿālims*! You are like those ignoramuses who have immersed themselves in the world and are desirous of it. You are the ones who corrupt the masses, because they will say: 'If this is the condition of Muhammad who is an *ʿālim*, we are following and emulating him.'"

On hearing all this, Muhammad ibn Muqātil [who was already sick], became more sick. Hātim *rahimahullāh* then said to him: "I am a non-Arab, I want you to teach me how to perform *wudū'* for salāh." He said: "You perform the *wudū'* and I will observe how you perform it. Hātim *rahimahullāh* gargled his mouth three times, sniffed water into his nostrils, washed his right hand, but when he came to his left hand, he washed it four times. The *'ālim* said: "You have committed *isrāf* (an act of wastage) by washing four times." Hadrat Hātim *rahimahullāh* said: "Glory to Allāh! You disapproved of my wastage of one scoop of water, yet you did not disapprove of all your wastage and extravagance in your house!?" He realized that the request to teach him *wudū'* was merely to draw his attention to his extravagance. He was admonished by it, and subsequently left his house, servants, etc. and joined the ascetics. (*Tabaqāt*)

The basis for his *tawakkul*

Muhammad ibn Abū 'Imrān says: "A person asked Hātim Asamm this question: 'What is the basis for your *tawakkul* (reliance) on Allāh *ta'ālā*?' He replied: 'It is based on four things:

1. When I realized that no one else will eat my sustenance, my heart became convinced of its sustenance.

2. When I realized that no one else will do my work for me, I became engrossed in my

work (why should I hope for others to do my work?).

3. When I realized that death will come suddenly, I hastened in preparing for it.

4. When I realized that Allāh *taʿālā* is watching me all the time, I became ashamed of Him."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look on what clear things Shaykh Hātim *rahimahullāh* placed the foundation for his *tawakkul*. It is essential for everyone to bear these in mind.

The condition of his salāh

ʿĀsim ibn Yūsuf went to Hātim *rahimahullāh* when he was explaining something in his assembly. ʿĀsim ibn Yūsuf asked: "How do you perform your salāh?" Hadrat Hātim *rahimahullāh* said: "I get ready and proceed calmly. I enter the salāh through my intention and say the *takbīr* (*Allāhu akbar*) with full respect. I read the Qur'ān in a flowing pace while reflecting on what I am reading. I go into *rukūʿ* with submission, and into *sajdah* with humility. I make *salām* in accordance with the Sunnah, and then present my salāh in the court of Allāh *taʿālā* with full sincerity. I present it while fearing it may not be accepted by Him." ʿĀsim ibn Yūsuf said: "You perform salāh in an excellent manner."

Statements

1. ʿAbdullāh ibn Sahl says: I heard Hātim ibn Asamm *rahimahullāh* saying: "I remained in the company of Shafiq for thirty years. He asked me one day: 'What did you learn?' I replied:

1. I realized that my sustenance is the responsibility of my Allāh *taʿālā*, so I became occupied in His *dhikr*.

2. When I realized that Allāh *taʿālā* has appointed two angels who record everything which I do, I only speak the truth.

3. When I became convinced that Allāh *taʿālā* observes my internal while people look at my external, I realized that the rectification of the internal is essential and more important. Then thoughts about people observing me disappeared completely from my heart.

4. When I saw that Allāh *taʿālā* is going to summon His servants to His self, I began making preparations for it because I do not know when death will arrive.

Shafiq said to me: "Your efforts did not go to waste."

2. Hāmid al-Laffāf relates: I heard Hātim Asamm saying: "Satan says to me every morning: (1) What will you eat? What will you wear? Where will you live?" I say to him: "I will eat death, I will

wear a *kafan* (burial shroud), and I will live in a grave."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent reply which is certain to silence Satan. If only we could remain conscious of this condition.

3. A person asked Hadrat Hātim Asamm *rahimahullāh*: "Do you have a desire for anything?" He replied: "I hope for *ʿāfiyat* (well-being, wellness) from the day to the night." The person said: "Do you not experience *ʿāfiyat* throughout the day?" He replied: "By *ʿāfiyat* I mean not disobeying Allāh *taʿālā* for that day."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent explanation of *ʿāfiyat*. I heard that Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat [Maulānā Thānwī] *rahimahullāh* also defined *khayriyat* as follows: "When there is no disobedience of Allāh *taʿālā*, you can conclude you are experiencing *khayriyat*."

4. "Prepare yourself for three things:

1. When you do anything, be conscious of the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* is watching you.

2. When you speak, think to yourself that Allāh *taʿālā* is listening to your words.

3. When you are silent, think to yourself that Allāh *taʿālā* has full knowledge of your internal and external self." (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 4, p. 161)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What beneficial words of advice which are worthy of being imprinted in our hearts.

5. "If a person makes claims to three things without possessing three other things, then he is a liar:

1. A person who claims fear of Allāh *taʿālā* but does not abstain from His prohibitions is a liar.

2. A person who claims love for Paradise without spending his wealth in Allāh's obedience is a liar.

3. A person who claims love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* but does not love poverty is a liar."

6. ʿAssām ibn Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* sent a gift to him, so he accepted it. Someone asked him: "Why did you accept this gift?" He replied: "Accepting it entailed humiliation of my *nafs*, and refusing it entailed pride for my *nafs*. So I preferred humiliating my *nafs*."

Note: Similarly, Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* accepted a gift from a Nawāb Sāhib in the presence of many people although it was against his principles to accept gifts from such people. He accepted it to save the Nawāb Sāhib from humiliation, and then

returned it to him in privacy so that he does not break his own principles.

Demise

He passed away in 237 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 69)

Hadrat Abū Hāmid Ahmad ibn Khadrawīyyah Balkhī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Hāmid, and Khadrawīyyah is his father's name. He was a resident of Balkh.

Merits

He is listed among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Khurāsān. He remained in the company of Abū Turāb Nakhshabī *rahimahullāh* and Hātim Asamm *rahimahullāh*. He journeyed to meet Abū Yazīd Bustāmī and also visited Abū Hafs Haddād *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. "A *walī* of Allāh *taʿālā* neither has a sign for himself by which he is recognized, nor does he have a name by which he is described." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 75)

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is real sincerity and devotion to Allāh *taʿālā*. Despite reaching a point of perfection, he did not like name and fame. Unfortunately, people of the Tarīqah of today's times seem to be desirous of this. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

2. "The path is illuminated and clear, and the caller also explained everything. If a person is

now confused, it can only be because of blindness." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 21)

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow us all with true insight so that it is easy to understand the truth. Āmīn.

Pangs of death

Muhammad ibn Hāmid says: "It was the time when Ahmad ibn Khadrawīyyah was on his death bed. I was sitting at his side, and he was already 95 years old by then. While in this condition, one of his disciples asked him a question. Tears appeared in his eyes, and he said: "O son! I had been knocking on a door for the last 95 years, and it is about to open now. I do not know whether its opening will be to my good fortune or to my misfortune. Where do I have the time to give you an answer?"

He was owing 700 dīnārs at the time and his creditors were also present. He looked at them and said: "O Allāh! You have stipulated a note of mortgage for the rightful owners and You will take it from them on the day of Resurrection. So please pay my debts on my behalf." A person immediately gave a purse and asked: "Where are Ahmad's creditors?" He then paid off all the debts, and he passed away soon thereafter. (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, p. 80)

Demise

According to the *Tabaqāt*, he passed away in 240 A.H. while *Nafahātul Uns* states that he passed away in 264 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 210)

Hadrat Sayyidunā Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his father's name is Muhammad, his grandfather's name is Hambal, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū 'Abdillāh.

Birth and family

Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* was born in Rabī' al-Awwal 164 A.H. in Baghdad. He was from a pure Arab lineage from the Shaybān tribe. Patience, steadfastness and resoluteness were historical qualities of this tribe.

Education

He memorized the Qur'ān in his childhood, and studied language and literature. He paid special attention to Hadīth. He says: "Some days I used to get ready so early in order to go to study Hadīth that my mother would hold me and say: 'At least wait for the *adhān* of *fajr* to be called out and it gets a bit bright.'"

He studied Hadīth for four years in Baghdad under the imām of Hadīth, Haytham ibn Bashīr ibn Abū Hāzim al-Wasatī. After completing his studies here, he travelled to Basra, Hijāz, Yemen, Shām and Jazīrah, and studied under the famous *muhaddithīn* of each of these places. His high courage, striving, many travels, natural and extraordinary memory resulted in his memorizing

one million Ahādīth. This is the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* which He bestows on whomever He wills.

Hadīth lessons

When he was forty years old – probably in 204 A.H. – he began conducting Hadīth lessons. This showed his total emulation of the Sunnah in the sense that he started teaching at the age of forty – the age at which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* received prophet-hood.

Character and habits

ʿAllāmah Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* quotes the words of a contemporary of Hadrat Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh* as follows: "He was very humble and self-effacing. Tranquillity and decorum were clearly visible on his face. He used to sit after the *ʿasr salāh* to conduct his lessons, but would not commence until he was asked."

His life was one of poverty, abstention and contentment like that of the past imāms. His poverty was by choice. He never accepted any gift from the caliphs and rulers of the time.

He would work and spend from his family inheritance, and live his life in this way. Despite this poverty and need, he was very generous and big-hearted.

His generosity was not confined to his wealth. Rather, he was extremely big-hearted and magnanimous with regard to his self. A person

accused him of being very lazy. But after a short while, he regretted saying this. So he came back to him and apologized, saying: "Please pardon me." He replied: "I pardoned you even before you stepped out of the place where this unsavoury incident had occurred."

During the tribulation of *khalq-e-Qur'ān* (belief that the Qur'ān was a creation of Allāh *taʿālā*), he forgave all his enemies – even the caliph who had imposed harsh torments on him. He used to say: "There is only one person whom I cannot pardon, and that is the one who calls towards *bidʿah*."

Note: This shows that the repugnancy of *bidʿah* is worse than disobedience. This is because a person committing a *bidʿah* considers it to be an act of obedience. And so, he will not even repent from it. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us.

Humility

Harwazī relates: "I said to him on one occasion: 'Many people are making *duʿā* for you.' He replied: 'I fear this might be a respite from Allāh *taʿālā*.'"

There were times when even non-Muslims would come from distant places merely to see him. A Christian doctor came to treat him, and said: "I was desirous of meeting you since many years. Your living is not only a cause of goodness and blessings for Islam, but for the entire creation. We are most pleased by your blessed self. Harwazī relates: "When he departed, I said: 'I think the entire world of Islam must be making *duʿā* for

you.' He said: 'Brother, when one's real self is exposed to him, he is not deceived by what the world says.'"

Note: This is because a person has absolute knowledge about his own defects and shortcomings. This is why the praise of others does not affect his conviction [in Allāh *taʿālā*].

The time of tests and tribulations

The eras of Ma'mūn, Muʿtasim and Wāthiq were times of tests and tribulations for him because they were all hell-bent against him. The era of Mutawakkil was one of tribulation for him because he [Mutawakkil] was very much impressed by him and appreciative of him. He felt the tests of this era to be more severe, and would always remain fearful of it. He used to say occasionally: "My *Dīn* remained intact despite these people's oppression and torments. I am now going through this tribulation [of appreciation by Mutawakkil] in my old age." However, just as the torments of Muʿtasim could not change his steadfastness and firm adherence to the Sunnah, Mutawakkil's admiration of him could not change his independence and reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: This shows that he was blessed with the rank of *tawakkul*.

His unique fortitude and steadfastness

Muhammad ibn Ismāʿīl says: "I have heard that Ahmad *rahimahullāh* was lashed in such a way

that if just one such lash was given to an elephant, it would scream and flee." His son says: "When my father passed away, his body had marks of the beating which he received." Abul ʿAbbās ar-Raqī says: "When Imām Ahmad was imprisoned in Ruqqah, people tried to convince him to retract and quoted Ahādīth to him through which he could save himself. So he said: 'What answer do you have to this Hadīth of Hadrat Khabbāb *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* in which he said: 'There were people in the past on whose heads saws were placed, but they did not renounce their *Dīn*.' On hearing this, people lost hope, realized that he will not shift away from his position, and will bear every type of torment. Consequently, Imām Ahmad's status increased two fold. Love for him became a feature and sign of the Ahl as-Sunnah and those holding correct beliefs." Qutaybah, his contemporary says:

إِذَا رَأَيْتَ الرَّجُلَ يُحِبُّ أَحْمَدَ بْنَ حَنْبَلٍ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ صَاحِبُ سُنَّةٍ

"If you see a person loving Ahmad ibn Hambal, you must conclude that he follows the Sunnah."

Merits

Abū ʿAsamah *rahimahullāh* says: "I spent a night in the service of Hadrat Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh*. He placed some water next to me and, in the morning, he saw that it was exactly as it was. He said: 'Glory to Allāh! Here is a person who is seeking knowledge and he does not engage

in any worship in the night! (this is most astonishing).'"

During the days when he was put through torments, he was presented before the one who was appointed to lash him. Allāh *taʿālā* caused Abul Haytham to plead on his behalf like this: He came and stood next to Hadrat Imām and said: "O Ahmad! I am such and such thief who was given 18 000 lashes to admit his theft, but I did not admit it. I did this although I knew I was in the wrong. You must save yourself from fearing the pain of the lashes because you are certainly on the truth." When he used to feel the excruciating pain of the lashes, he would think of the advice of the thief. After this incident, mercy was shown to Hadrat Imām *rahimahullāh*.

When he went to Mutawakkil [the caliph], the latter said to his mother: "O mother! The whole house has become illuminated by the arrival of this person." People then brought new sets of clothing for him and gave him a bath. He began crying and said: "I remained safe from the rulers throughout my life, but when death is close to me, I have been tested by the rulers and their world." He removed those clothes when he left the caliph's house. Hadrat Bashīr ibn al-Hārith *rahimahullāh* says: "Hadrat Imām Ahmad's

tribulation was put through a furnace, this is why it came out as pure gold."[1]

Abstention

Hadrat Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh* was proverbial for his abstention. Mutawakkil sent him a bag [of money] which was so heavy that it had to be placed on a donkey and brought to him. He expressly said: "I have no need for it." The person who brought it said: "It is not appropriate for you to send it back. The caliph's heart has been cleansed after much difficulty. If you return it, he will have bad thoughts again." Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh* instructed for it to be kept one side. When half the night passed, he called his uncle and said: "I could not fall asleep the whole night because of that bag. I regret accepting it, and am very troubled by it." He said: "It is the middle of the night now and people are fast asleep. Wait till morning and you can do whatever you feel."

The very next morning he summoned for a few reliable people and prepared a list of people who were righteous but whose situation was not known. He then began distributing the money until not a single dirham remained in the bag. After this, he also gave the bag to a poor person.

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[1] Maulānā Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī: *Tārīkh Da'wat wa 'Azīmat*, vol. 1, p. 93.

Humility

His steadfastness on the issue of *khalq-e-Qur'ān* caused him to become famous throughout the Islamic world. Praises and *duʿās* were being showered on him from all sides. Despite this, he remained fearful [of Allāh *taʿālā*] and was not satisfied with his self.

Statements

1. "Congratulations to the person whom Allāh *taʿālā* kept anonymous."

2. "I saw Allāh *taʿālā* in a dream, so I asked Him: 'Which is the most superior deed through which Your close servants came close to You?' Allāh *taʿālā* said: 'Through My speech [the Qur'ān].' I said: 'Is it by understanding it or without understanding it.' Allāh *taʿālā* said: 'Irrespective of whether they understood it or not.'"

Note: Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* also quoted this dream in his book, *Tilāwat-e-Qur'ān.*

3. "Hadrat Yahyā ibn Zakarīyyā *ʿalayhimas salām* got married in order to safeguard his gaze."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how much importance he gave to safeguarding himself from evil gazes although he was a Prophet.

4. “If a person has 100 good qualities but has one evil habit of consuming alcohol, it will wipe out all the good qualities.”

Note: This is why a Hadīth refers to alcohol as *umm al-khabā’ith* (the mother of all evils). Another Hadīth states:

لاَ تَشْرِبَنَّ خَمْرًا فَإِنَّهُ رَأْسُ كُلِّ فَاحِشَةٍ

“Do not drink alcohol because it is the basis for every act of immorality.”

Illness and demise

He was 77 years old when he fell ill. There were so many people to visit him that they used to enter in groups after groups, and the house would get full. When one group departed, the next group would enter. The street used to get filled with people. He remained ill for nine days. The crowds were increasing all the time, until the alley was closed off. People filled the musjid and street to the extent that buying and selling in the markets became difficult.

His health deteriorated on a Thursday. His student, Marwazī, says: “I helped him to perform *wudū’*, but even in this condition of discomfort, he instructed me to make *khilāl* of his fingers. His health deteriorated even further on Thursday night, and this imām of the Sunnah passed away the next day on Friday 12 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 241

A.H. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.[1]

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow us weak servants with just one ember of the fortitude of this imām of the Ahl as-Sunnah. May He illuminate our chests with the light of the Sunnah, and honour us with success and salvation in the Hereafter. Āmīn.

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[1] Maulānā Abul Hasan ʿAlī Nadwī: *Tārīkh Daʿwat wa ʿAzīmat*, vol. 1, p. 114.

Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ahmad ibn Maulid as-Sūfī ar-Raqī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his father's name is Ahmad, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Is-hāq.

Merits

He is from among the fourth level of *mashā'ikh*. He is one of the senior *mashā'ikh* of Ruqqah, and its courageous men. He had the opportunity of remaining in the company of Shaykh Abū 'Abdillāh Jalā' and Shaykh Ibrāhīm Qassār.

Statements

1. Shaykh Abūl Hasan 'Alī ibn Ahmad says: "I am astonished at the person who knows that his destination is towards Allāh *ta'ālā* yet he spends his life in the company of others. Whereas Allāh *ta'ālā* Himself says:

وَأَنِيْبُوْا إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوْا لَهُ

"Turn to your Sustainer and submit to Him."

2. "During the initial stages of my *tasawwuf*, I intended to go and visit Shaykh Muslim Maghribī *rahimahullāh*. I reached his musjid and he was leading the people in salāh at the time. He read Sūrah al-Fātihah incorrectly in several places. I thought to my self, 'How sorrowful! All my efforts are gone to waste (for having borne the hardships

of a journey to meet such an incompetent person).' Anyway, I spent the night there. I got up the next day to relieve myself and decided to go to the bank of the Euphrates River. I saw a lion sleeping on the path. I could not proceed further so I turned back. I saw another lion coming towards me from the back. I became terrified, did not know what to do, and started shouting. On hearing my shouts, Shaykh Muslim Maghribī *rahimahullāh* came out of his room. He caught both lions by their ears and twisted them severely. He said to them: 'O dogs of Allāh! Did I not tell you not to disturb my guests?' He then said to me: 'O Abū Is-hāq! You are worried about setting right external conditions, that is why you fear Allāh's creations. Whereas we are occupied with setting right our internal conditions, that is why Allāh's creations fear us.'" (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 435)

Note: Hadrat Shaykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* relates an incident of this nature in his *Bustān*. He says: I saw a person riding a cheetah and coming towards me. I was so terrified that my feet could not move. He smiled at me, placed his hand on my face, and said: 'O Saʿdī! Do not be astonished by whatever you see. You too must not disobey any order of Allāh *taʿālā*, and no creation will disobey your order.'"

Demise

He passed away in 242 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh al-Hārith ibn Asad al-Muhāsibī[1] *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Hārith, his father's name is Asad Muhāsibī, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh.

Birth

He was born in Basra. The exact year of his birth is not known, but in the light of the dates of demise of some of his teachers and *shuyūkh*, he must have been born around 165 A.H. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best.

Merits

He was a famous imām and *ʿārif billāh* (one who truly recognized Allāh *taʿālā*). He was an exponent of wisdom, and unique in his era as regards asceticism, rectitude, knowledge, dealings and conditions. He was a well known ascetic, ardent worshipper, speaker, orator, and admonisher. Because he used to take constant stock of his self (*muhāsabah*), he came to be known as Muhāsibī.

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[1] Hadrat Muhāsibī's famous book, *Risālatur Mustarshidīn*, has been translated by myself into Urdu. Footnotes and commentaries to it are written by Hadrat ʿAllāmah ʿAbd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah *rahimahullāh*. He also wrote aspects from the life of Muhāsibī *rahimahullāh* at the beginning of his commentary. This has been translated by Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Rashīd Bastawī. I am quoting extracts from it. (Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān)

Aspects from his life

Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* who was his student says: "Hadrat Muhāsibī used to remain in poverty and dire conditions. I was sitting at my door one day when Hadrat Shaykh passed by. I noticed weakness and low energy on his face which was due to extreme hunger. I said: 'O dear uncle! Come inside, we will get some food and your weakness will be removed.' He asked: 'Will you make the arrangements?' I replied: 'Yes, I will certainly do it. I will be most pleased by this and I will consider it to be my greatest honour. In fact, it will be favour on your part if you accept.' I took him inside my house. I then proceeded immediately to my uncle's house which was bigger than mine and where various types of exquisite foods were always available. In this way, I presented many different foods before the shaykh. Hadrat Shaykh took one morsel and placed it in his mouth. I noticed him chewing it but not swallowing it. He then left the house hastily without telling me anything. When I met him the next day, I said: 'O uncle! Initially you made me happy, but I was saddened by what you did after that.' He said: 'My dear lad! My hunger was certainly very severe, and I also tried to eat the food which you offered to me. However, there is a special indication between myself and Allāh *ta'ālā*. If there is the slightest doubt about the food, a slight smell emanates from it and enters my nose. Consequently, my temperament cannot accept the food. I left the morsel at your door and departed.'"

ʿAllāmah Qushayrī adds: "I said to him: 'Come to my house again today.' When he came, I presented a few pieces of dry bread from my house. He ate them and said: 'This is the type of food you must offer to an ascetic.'"

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the level of *īmān* and fineness in his temperament – his system would not accept any doubtful food. I have heard about Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* that he could not digest doubtful food since childhood.

Statements

1. "Everything has an essence, and the essence of man is his intellect. The essence of the intellect is the inspiration (*taufīq*) for good. Or we could say that the essence of the intellect is patience."

2. "Good character entails bearing discomfort, controlling one's anger, adopting a smiling countenance, and pure speech."

3. "The asceticism of an ascetic is according to the level of his *maʿrifat* (recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*), *maʿrifat* is according to the level of his intellect, and his intellect is according to the strength of his *īmān*."

4. "An oppressive person remains ashamed even if people praise him (in other words, his heart reprimands him). An oppressed person is at peace even if people may speak ill of him (in other words, his heart remains at peace). A content

person is rich under every condition even if he is experiencing hunger. An avaricious person is poor even if he is wealthy."

5. "The person who does not thank Allāh *taʿālā* for a favour has actually asked for the disappearance of that favour."

Note: What a serious warning against ingratitude! May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us all. Āmīn.

6. "When a person is righteous, Allāh *taʿālā* causes others to become righteous through his righteousness. When a person is corrupt, Allāh *taʿālā* causes others to become corrupt through his corruption."

7. "Servitude and being a slave of Allāh *taʿālā* demand that you do not consider any ownership for your self. And you must have conviction that you do not control profit and loss for your self."

8. "Sincerity removes the creation from one's relationship with Allāh *taʿālā*, and man's *nafs* (self) is the first creation."

9. "When a person embellishes his inner self with *murāqabah* (meditation) and sincerity, Allāh *taʿālā* beautifies his outer self with striving and following the Sunnah."

10. "The best people of the *ummah* are those who are not deprived of this world because of the

Hereafter, and their worldly life does not cause them to become heedless of the Hereafter."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a balanced statement! This is the essential teaching of the Sharīʿah.

11. "The first calamity to afflict a person is when his heart becomes devoid of the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*. This causes heedlessness to creep into his heart."

Note: Unfortunately we do not even consider this to be a calamity. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us from this serious calamity.

Hadrat Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* went to visit him, and after listening to his talks, he said: "I used to hear statements against him from the Sufis. I seek forgiveness from Allāh, the Great."

Demise

He passed away in Baghdad in 243 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him and may He illuminate his grave. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 64)

Hadrat Abul Fayd Dhun Nūn Misrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Thaubān, his father's name is Ibrāhīm, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Fayd, and his title is Dhun Nūn.

Merits

He is from among the students of Imām Mālik ibn Anas *rahimahullāh* and he studied the *Muwattā* under him. He also studied *fiqh* under him and followed his *madh-hab*. In other words, he is a Mālikī. He was an imām of his time, a unique personality, and a leader of the Sufis. All the *mashā'ikh* are affiliated to him. Although many *mashā'ikh* passed before him, he alone enjoys this honour. He used to spend the nights and days in worship, and expounded on the mysteries of *tasawwuf*. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 178)

Statements

1. He used to address the *'ulamā'* saying: "We have met people who, when they made any progress in knowledge, they would become more abstinent in the world and their dislike for it would increase. But today, the more knowledge is increasing, the more love and quest for the world is increasing, and people are competing against each other in this regard. We found the past peoples spending their wealth for the acquisition

of knowledge, but you are spending knowledge for the acquisition of wealth."

Note: Look at what changes took place in such a short time! As for today, do not even ask about the retrogression which has taken place. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* and ask for His protection.

2. "People have been mocking at and belittling the Sufis and ascetics in every era. This is because they [the poor and ascetics] may have the honour of emulating and following the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What great consolation for the Sufis. When Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* came to Ilāhābād, the people opposed him vehemently. He became saddened and depressed and thought to himself: "Wherever I go, people oppose me and are antagonistic towards me." Allāh *taʿālā* cast this thought in his heart: When you are doing the work of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, it is inevitable for you to be put through these trials and tribulations. Hadrat was very much consoled by this. Hadrat used to relate this to us: You are being harassed and tormented because of this work [of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*], why, then, should you feel depressed?

3. "One of the signs that Allāh *taʿālā* is displeased with a person is when he remains fearful of

poverty. In other words, he is not pleased with Allāh's distribution."

4. "There is a sign for everything. And the sign that a person has been driven out of Allāh's court is that he gets cut off from the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*."

5. The fakirs spoke about love to him. So he said: "Abstain from such speech because the avaricious people will overhear it and they will also claim love."

6. "Some hearts seek forgiveness even before committing sin. So (Allāh *taʿālā* bestows this favour on them): He rewards them even before they do a good deed."

7. "When we used to hear about any youngster speaking in a *majlis* (assembly), we would have no hope for his goodness."

Note: This is why it is said: Acquire knowledge before becoming a leader. When he is firm in knowledge and practice, it will not be harmful to speak in an assembly. If not, the paths of progress will be sealed for him, and he will remain devoid of excellent qualities.

8. A person said to him: "Hadrat, my wife conveys *salām* to you." He replied: "You people must not convey *salām* from women to me."

9. “We err in our actions while we have perfected our speech. How, then, can we be successful?” I [ʿAllāmah Shaʿrānī] say: “Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Adham used to say: “When Allāh *taʿālā* bestows His proximity to a person, He blesses him with knowledge without seeking it.”’

10. “If a person acquired knowledge and cognition, but still gives preference to the desires of his self over action, then he is not an intelligent person. In like manner, a person who demands justice for his self from others but does not mete out justice to others is not an intelligent person. Similarly, a person who disregards Allāh *taʿālā* when it comes to obeying His commands but remembers Him at times of need is not an intelligent person.”

11. “Treat all the creations with humility, but not the one who demands humility from you, because his demand demonstrates pride within his self. If you were to be humble before him, you will be helping him in increasing his sickness of pride.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Even in this, there is desire for the good and well-being of the proud person in the sense that his pride must not increase so that he is not completely lost and destroyed.

12. “There is a total disregard for the seriousness of sins to the extent that people are engrossed in the desires of their stomachs and private parts. Furthermore, they are unable to see their faults, due to which they are destroyed. But they do not

know it. They have become bold in eating *harām* and do not even look for *halāl* sustenance. They are pleased with knowledge without action. When they do not know something, they are ashamed to express their ignorance. The truth of the matter is that they are not *ʿulamā'* of the Sharīʿah but slaves of this world. Had they been *ʿulamā'* of the Sharīʿah, it [Sharīʿah] would have prevented them from evils. Their condition is very strange: when they have to ask for a certain thing, they will insist on it. But when any *Dīnī* or worldly good is asked of them, they are miserly. They have worn clothes of humans over hearts of wolves. They converted the *masājid* of Allāh *taʿālā* – in which His name used to be called out – into a field for useless fights, disputes, and rumours. They have made knowledge of *Dīn* into a net to trap the world. So you people must beware of such people, and abstain from sitting in their company."

13. "A sign that a person has turned away from Allāh *taʿālā* is that you will find him forgetting the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*, and involved in futile play and amusement."

14. "Whenever I ate a stomach full, I either committed a sin or thoughts of it passed my mind."

Note: These are most beneficial words of advice. Practising on them is a cause of acquiring genuine happiness. May Allāh *taʿālā* make it easy for us to practice. Āmīn.

https://darulilm.wordpress.com/

Demise

He passed away in 245 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, pp. 60-61)

Hadrat Abū Turāb 'Askar ibn al-Husayn Nakhshabī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is 'Askar, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Turāb, and his father's name is Husayn.

Merits

He is from among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Khurāsān. He remained in the company of Shaykh Abū 'Attār Misrī and Hadrat Hātim Asamm *rahimahumallāh*. He is the *ustād* (teacher) of Shaykh Abū 'Abdillāh Jalā' and Shaykh Abū 'Ubayd Busrā. He spent a considerable amount of time in forests engaged in spiritual exercises. He spent many days standing on his feet and engaging in worship. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 204)

A strange incident

Yūsuf ibn Husayn narrates from Abū Turāb Nakhshabī *rahimahullāh* who said: "Once I was on a journey and my *nafs* felt like eating eggs and bread. So I moved away from the road and went to a residential area. A man got hold of me and announced: 'This man is with the thieves.' The people hanged me upside down and gave me seventy lashes. A Sufi happened to come by. When he saw me, he screamed and said: 'This is Abū Turāb Nakhshabī!' The people released me and apologized to me. A man took me to his house and placed eggs and bread before me. I

said to my *nafs*: 'You may now eat this after receiving seventy lashes.'"

Note: Allāh's *taʿālā* relationship with His special servants is also special.

Statements

1. "When a person does something with a genuine heart, he experiences its sweetness even before doing it. When he does it with sincerity, he experiences its sweetness while doing it."

2. Shaykh Ismāʿīl ibn Nujayd relates: "When he used to see his *murīds* (disciples) doing something which is disliked, he would make them to repent all over again, instruct them to engage in more striving (*mujāhadah*), and say to himself: 'It is because of my ill-fortune that they committed such an act.'" (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, p. 82)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his humility and self-effacement. May Allāh *taʿālā* embellish us all with this condition.

3. "Allāh *taʿālā* causes the *ʿulamāʾ* of every era to say things which are appropriate to the actions of that era."

Note: This is absolutely correct.

4. "When a person distracts a person who is engrossed with Allāh *taʿālā*, then Allāh's displeasure falls on him immediately."

Note: This shows that we should not unnecessarily turn the attention of one engaged in Allāh's *dhikr* to ourselves. The same applies to a teacher and admonisher. Unfortunately, let alone the masses, even the elite do not bear these etiquette in mind.

5. "The most harmful thing for *murīds* is to travel – in following their *nafs* – without the permission of their shaykh. Whenever any deficiency came into a *murīd*, it was because of this journey and mixing with strangers."

Note: This shows the need to be cautious in travelling unnecessarily and mixing with strangers. One of the principles of the Sufis is *qillat-e-ikhtilāṯ maʿal anām* (avoiding unnecessary interaction with people). The Sufis have four principles: (1) eat less, (2) sleep less, (3) speak less, (4) and interact less. Hadrat Mujaddidul Millat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* said: "Now there is no need to eat less and sleep less because it would cause impediments. But it is essential to adopt a balanced lifestyle. However, speaking less and interacting less are still essential." Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

He passed away in 245 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Ṯabaqāt*)

Hadrat Abul Hasan Surī Saqatī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Surī Saqatī, his father's name is al-Muflis, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan.

Merits

He is the maternal uncle and teacher of Sayyid at-Tā'ifah Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *quddisa sirruhu*, and the teacher of all the Sufis of Baghdad. He also remained in the company of Hadrat Maʿrūf Karkhī *rahimahullāh*. He was unique in his asceticism, lofty conditions, and the science of *tauhīd* (oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*). He is the first person to delve into the science of *tauhīd*.

Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* says: "I presented myself to him one day and saw him sweeping the house. He was saying this poem while sweeping:

لا في النهار ولا في الليل فرح – فلا أبالي أطال الليل أم قصرا

"I neither experience peace during the day nor joy in the night. So I do not bother whether the night is long or short."

Statements

1. "The person who wants his *Dīn* to be protected, his body to experience comfort, and be saved from listening to talks which cause him sorrow and

depression must remain aloof from people, because these are times of remaining in solitude."

Note: If this was the condition of the third century of the *hijrah*, you can decide for yourself about the situation in the fifteenth century. This era is certainly a time to remain silent and confined to one's house. Hadrat 'Uqbah ibn 'Āmir *radiyallāhu 'anhu* asked Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as to how he can gain salvation. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

أَمْلِكْ عَلَيْكَ لِسَانَكَ، وَلْيَسَعْكَ بَيْتُكَ، وَابْكِ عَلَى خَطِيْئَتِكَ

"Restrain your tongue, remain in your house, and cry over your sins."

2. "The greatest power is when you overpower your *nafs*. This is because if a person is unable to discipline his *nafs*, he will be more likely not to be able to discipline others."

3. "One of the signs of *istidrāj* (where Allāh *ta'ālā* gives a respite to a person until he drowns in his own sins) is when a person is blind to his own faults but fully aware of the faults of others."

Note: Every *sālik* (the one treading the path) has to be wary of this fact. In fact, he must continually fear it so that he may remain steadfast on the path.

4. 'Alī ibn Husayn *rahimahullāh* relates: "When Surī was suffering from a cough, my father sent

him *ḫabb-e-suʿāl* (a cough medicine). Surī asked me: 'How much does this medicine cost?' I replied: 'My father did not tell me its price.' He said: 'Go and convey my *salām* to your father and tell him: 'I know for a fact that the *buzurgs* (pious personalities) did not earn the world through their *Dīn*. Now do you think it right for me to eat and earn of this world in exchange for my *Dīn*?' Saying this, he gave the tablets back to me and did not use a single one from them."

5. "The person who experiences comfort with his self when people refer to him as a *walī* of Allāh is actually a prisoner of his *nafs*."

Note: This means that he is caught up in the illness of self-conceit which destroys a person's internal self.

6. "Three things are signs of Allāh's *taʿālā* displeasure: (1) an excess of play and amusement, (2) laughing and joking, (3) backbiting and complaining."

7. "Love between two people will not be genuine until each one says 'O me' to the other person, instead of saying 'O you' to him."

Note: This means that they must develop such mutual affinity, love and affection that all distance comes to an end.

8. "There are two qualities which cause servants to go far away from Allāh *taʿālā*: (1) leaving aside

the compulsory duties and carrying out optional acts, (2) doing actions with the limbs of the body without genuine sincerity from the heart."

Note: Glory to Allāh! This shows the importance of carrying out compulsory duties. Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to speak on this subject a lot. This is printed in his book, *Maʿrifat-e-Haqq*. The reader is advised to certainly study it because it is most enlightening.

Demise

He passed away in Baghdad in 251 A.H. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 64)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Saʿīd ibn Yazīd Banājī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage merits

His name is Saʿīd ibn Yazīd and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh. He is from among the early *mashā'ikh*. He was a contemporary of Hadrat Dhun Nūn Misrī *rahimahullāh*. He was one of the teachers of Shaykh Ahmad ibn al-Hawārī.

Statements

1. He says:

الأدب حلية الأبرار

"Good manners are the jewels of the pious."

لكل شيء خادم، وخادم الدين الأدب

"Everything has a servant, and the servant of Dīn is good manners."

Note: In other words, when manners and etiquette are observed, *Dīn* will be acquired. If not, a person may become wealthy but he cannot become religious. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

2. Hadrat Shaykh al-Islam says that Abū ʿAbdillāh Banājī *rahimahullāh* used to say: "Be hopeful that there is no brighter sign than Allāh *taʿālā*."

3. "Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* said to Allāh *taʿālā*: 'O Allāh! Where can I find You?' Allāh *taʿālā* said: 'You will find Me when you make a genuine intention.'" Shaykh Kathānī *rahimahullāh* said: "You will find Allāh *taʿālā* the moment you set right your intention." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 255)

Note: This shows that a genuine quest and firm determination are essential to reach Allāh *taʿālā*. To desire Allāh *taʿālā* and reach him without this is merely a fantasy.

Demise

He passed away in 254 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 6, p. 410)

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

The name of Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* is Muhammad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū 'Abdillāh, and his title is Amīr al-Mu'minīn fil Hadīth (the leader of the believers in Hadīth). His grandfather's name is Ibrāhīm ibn Mughīrah. He is known as Bukhārī because he is from Bukhārā.

Birth

He was born on 13 Shawwāl al-Mukarram 194 A.H. after the *jumu'ah salāh* in Bukhārā, and resided there.

Education

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* was very young when his father passed away. The entire responsibility of teaching and training him fell on his mother. She was a very pious woman and an ardent worshipper. She sent him to *maktab* (a primary *madrasah*) when he was five years old. He was ten years old when he began sitting in the different assemblies of Hadīth.

Science of Hadīth

Abū Ja'far Muhammad ibn Hātim *rahimahullāh* says: "I personally asked Imām Bukhārī: 'How did you reach this rank in Hadīth?' He replied: 'I was still in *maktab* when the importance of

memorizing Ḥadīth was instilled in my heart. This was when I was almost ten years old.'"

Imām Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* travelled to different cities for the sake of Ḥadīth. In the course of these journeys he had to experience poverty, he had to eat the leaves of trees and grass; but this did cause him to waver in the least.

Memory

Allāh *taʿālā* blessed him with an extraordinary memory. ʿAllāmah Qasṭalānī *raḥimahullāh* relates that Imām Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* memorized 70 000 Aḥādīth when he was still a young boy. (*Muqaddamah Naṣr al-Bārī*, p. 35)

Merits

He is enumerated among those practising *ʿulamāʾ* whose mere mention causes the descent of mercy. He used to fast continuously. He used to remain hungry to the extent that his appetite decreased until he would eat just one date or almond. His eating so less was because of his asceticism and bashfulness before Allāh *taʿālā* to go to the toilet. (*Ṭabaqāt*)

His salāh

Ghanjār writes that Bakr ibn Munīr said: "Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl Bukhārī was occupied in ṣalāh one night when a scorpion stung him seventeen times. When he completed his ṣalāh, he said: 'Check what was stinging me.'" (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 12, p. 441)

The book *Tabaqāt ash-Shāfiʿīyyah* adds to the above incident by saying that Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* neither broke his salāh nor did his face change in any way. Instead, he continued his salāh as normal. (*Tabaqāt ash-Shāfiʿīyyah*, vol. 2, p. 223)

Whether it was bitterly cold or raining heavily, whether he was on a journey or at home – Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* would perform *tahajjud salāh* under every condition. He would get up at night [for worship] but would not disturb his attendant into waking up. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 12, p. 441)

Teaching Hadīth without taking a wage

Salīm ibn Mujāhid says: "Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* used to teach Hadīth to people solely for Allāh's pleasure. He would not take anything from them." He also says: "I have not seen a jurist and *muhaddith* like him, nor a perfect human being like him as regards piety and righteousness."

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* built a *rabāt* near Bukhārā. Many of his associates and close friends gathered to help him, and he personally took part in its construction. He placed the bricks and other items by his self, and when people said that they will do it, he said: "I also need its benefits." He then invited all who were present, and they numbered over one hundred. He spent a considerable amount of money on them.

Pardon

'Abdullāh bin Sārifī relates: "I was with Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* when a slave-woman came in. She wanted to enter the house, Imām Sāhib's ink-pot was placed in front of him. As she passed by, the ink-pot fell. He said to her in an angry tone: 'How are you walking?' She replied: 'If there is no place to walk, what must I do?' Instead of replying in an angry tone, he said: 'You may go, I have freed you.' People said to him: 'She got you angry, yet you freed her!?' I am happy with whatever I did because it is better to pardon a person [than to become angry].'" (*Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 12, p. 452)

His perfect character

Muhammad ibn Abī Hātim Warrāq relates: "I accompanied Hadrat Imām *rahimahullāh* on a journey as an attendant to him. He got up 15-20 times in the night. On each occasion he would light the fire himself, make some marks on the Ahādīth, and would also take a rest in-between. He would then perform *tahajjud salāh* in the last part of the night. But he would not wake me up [because he did not want to disturb my sleep]."

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* said: "Every essential thing is found in the Qur'ān and Sunnah."

Note: This is why there is no need for a new Prophet. The *Dīn* has been perfected.

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* was extremely bashful, brave, generous, an ardent worshipper, an ascetic, and noble-minded. He always remained aloof from the rulers and wealthy people. (*Tārīkh Hadīth wa Muhaddithīn*)

Importance to the Qur'ān

He used to read one third of the Qur'ān in the nights of Ramadān in salāh for his friends. In this way, he used to complete one Qur'ān every three nights. He used to say: "*Duʿā* is accepted at the completion of the Qur'ān."

Before recording any Hadīth in his *Sahīh Bukhārī*, he would take a bath and perform two *rakʿats* of salāh as gratitude.

Note: This is the reason for the universal acceptance of *Sahīh Bukhārī.*

Importance to eating *halāl*

He used to eat from the wealth of his father because it was *halāl.* His father used to say: "I do not think I have even a single dirham in my wealth which could be doubtful." (*Tabaqāt*)

Statements

1. "Those who praise me and those who criticize me are the same to me."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a high level of accepting the decree of Allāh *taʿālā* he had! This is the highest level in the Tarīq of the Sufis.

Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī *rahimahullāh* described this condition in a letter which he wrote to Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

2. "I am confident of meeting Allāh *taʿālā* in a condition wherein He will not question me about backbiting anyone."

Note: This shows his perfect *taqwā* and lofty asceticism in the sense that despite suffering so much at the hands of people, he did not backbite anyone. This is a sign that he was a *siddīq*. ʿAllāmah Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* says that saving one's self from backbiting is from among the traits of the *siddīqīn*.

3. People used to say to him: "You must make *duʿā* against your enemies who are wronging you and making false accusations against you." He would reply: "Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: 'Remain patient until you meet me at the Haud-e-Kauthar (the Fountain of Abundance in Paradise).' He also said: 'When a person makes *duʿā* against his oppressor, he has taken a sort of requital.' That is why I do not do anything – I hand over the matter to Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how firmly he adhered to the Sunnah. This is how he was blessed with the rank of being a *siddīq*, and his book [the *Sahīh Bukhārī*] received the honour of being the most authentic book after the Book of

Allāh. This is the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He bestows to whomever He wills.

Imām Bukhārī is put through a test

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* left Nīshābūr for his hometown [Bukhārā]. When the people of Bukhārā heard of his imminent arrival, they were overjoyed and they raised pavilions and pitched tents for several miles. The entire city came out to receive him, and they brought him into the city with absolute reverence and honour.

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* began conducting Hadīth lessons in Bukhārā, and those who were thirsty for knowledge attended his lessons in droves. But those who were envious of him did not leave him here also. Acting on the advice of some envious people, the governor of Bukhārā, Khālid ibn Ahmad Dhuhalī, sent a request to Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* asking him to come to his palace and teach his sons the *Bukhārī Sharīf* and history. But Imām Bukhārī sent a verbal reply with the messenger saying:

لَا أُذِلُّ الْعِلْمَ وَلَا أَحْمَلَهُ إِلَى أَبْوَابِ السَّلَاطِيْنِ

"I will not denigrate knowledge by taking it to the doors of the rulers."

Anyone who wants to study must come to me.

The governor sent another message saying: "If you cannot come, then set aside a special time for them wherein others are not present with them."

Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was not happy about this arrangement and said: "The Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* are equally for the entire *ummah*. I cannot deprive anyone from hearing them. If you do not approve of this reply, you can issue an [official] order for me to stop my lessons so that I can present it as an excuse before Allāh *taʿālā*."

The governor was most displeased by this answer. Those who were jealous of Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* instigated the governor into slandering him about his beliefs and accusing him of being a *bidʿatī* (one who commits innovations in Islam). The governor then ordered him to leave Bukhārā. Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was very much pained, and made this *duʿā* against his opponents:

أللهم أرهم ما قصدوني في أنفسهم وأولادهم وأهاليهم

"O Allāh! Just as they have willed to disgrace me, cause disgrace to their selves, their children and their families."

Consequently, before one month could pass, the caliph of the Muslims became angry with this governor over some reason and dismissed him. The caliph sent a new governor and instructed him to humiliate the dismissed governor by seating him on a donkey and parading him through the city. He was then imprisoned and died a short time later in a despicable and humiliating way. Moreover, the governor's

accomplices such as Hurayth ibn Warqā' and others experienced different calamities and were destroyed.

A Hadīth Qudsī states:

مَنْ عَادَى لِيْ وَلِيًّا فَقَدْ آذَنْتُهُ بِالْحَرْبِ

"I [Allāh] declare war on the one who has any enmity for My walī (close friend)."

Nevertheless, Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* left and proceeded to Beykand. But he was opposed here as well, so he did not feel it appropriate to continue living here. In the meantime, the people of Samarqand invited him. He accepted their invitation and proceeded for Samarqand. A place called Khartang fell on the way. He had some relatives who lived there. Because it was the blessed month [of Ramadān], he decided to stay over. While in Khartang, he received a message from some people in Samarqand informing him that the situation there was not conducive because people were having certain differences. Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* made the following *du'ā* in *tahajjud* during the last ten days of Ramadān:

أَللّٰهُمَّ ضَاقَتْ عَلَيَّ الأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ فَاقْبِضْنِيْ إِلَيْكَ

"O Allāh! The land has become constricted upon me despite its vastness. So take me away to Yourself."

The people of Samarqand made investigations about the objections against Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* and realized that they were wrong. So they all sent a collective invitation to him. Imām Sāhib *rahimahullāh* asked for a steed, he walked a few feet with support from two people, and said: "I am getting weaker." He then made a *duʿā* and lied down. Perspiration began flowing from his blessed body and he passed away. He thus lived a life of thirteen days short of 62 years, and the great sun of knowledge and acumen passed away on the night of ʿĪd al-Fitr 256 A.H. He was the sun who had illuminated countless hearts and minds among the masses and elite of Bukhārā, Samarqand, Baghdad and Nīshāpūr.

Note: Today, the entire world is illuminated by his contribution.

This embodiment of light and miracles was buried in Khartang on the day of ʿĪd al-Fitr, on a Saturday, after the *zuhr salāh*. (*Muqaddamah Nasr al-Bārī*, vol. 1, p. 44)

Written works

His most important written work is the *Bukhārī Sharīf*, whose full name is:

الجامع الصحيح المسند من حديث رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وسننه وأيامه

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* says: "I compiled this book in the Musjid-e-Harām, and before entering each Hadīth, I would make *istikhārah*

(seeking goodness from Allāh *taʿālā*) and perform two *rakʿats* of salāh. Once I was fully satisfied about the authenticity of a Hadīth, I would record it in my book.

Bukhārī Sharīf has numerous merits. Abū Zayd Marwazī *rahimahullāh* relates: "I was sleeping in the area between the Hajar-e-Aswad and Maqām-e-Ibrāhīm when I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream. He said: 'O Abū Zayd! For how long are you going to continue the book of Imām Shāfiʿī? When will you start teaching my book?' I asked: 'Hadrat, which is your book?' He replied: 'The *al-Jāmiʿ as-Sahīh* of Muhammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī.'"

Hāfiz Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* says that a drought comes to an end by reading *Bukhārī Sharīf*, and rains come down through the blessing of completing it during a drought.[1]

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[1] Maulānā Taqī ad-Dīn Nadwī Mazāhirī Nadwī: *Muhaddithīn-e-ʿIzām aur unke ʿilmī kārnāme*, p. 123).

Hadrat Abū Zakarīyyā Yahyā ibn Muʿādh al-Wāʿiz ar-Rāzī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Yahyā, his father's name is Muʿādh, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Zakarīyyā, and his title is al-Wāʿiz. He lived in Balkh for quite some time, then settled down in Nīshāpūr, and remained there until his end.

Statements

1. "The submission and surrender of sinners is more liked [by Allāh *taʿālā*] than the pomp and show of the obedient ones."

2. "There is nothing worse than considering a sin to be insignificant. So do not even have thoughts of belittling a sin. You should rather think about who you are disobeying."

3. "When Allāh *taʿālā* befriends a person, He causes his heart to be occupied with Him."

4. "The person who sees something other than friendship in his friend has not looked at his friend, but looked at something else as his friend." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 210)

5. He used to say to his companions: "Stay away from three types of people: (1) heedless *ʿulamā'*, (2) duping *qurrā'* (plural of *qārī*), and (3) ignorant Sufis who became engrossed in worship before learning the essentials of *Dīn*."

6. “The person who does not benefit from his shaykh’s actions will not benefit from his statements as well.”

7. “A person’s *Dīn* will remain deficient as long as his heart is attached to love of this world.”

8. “A sincere friend is neither a show off nor a hypocrite. But there are very few friends who possess these characteristics.”

9. “The practising *ʿulamā’* are more kind and affectionate to the *ummah* of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* than their parents.” Someone asked him: “How is this?” He replied: “Their worldly parents will protect them from the fire of this world, while these *ʿulamā’* safeguard them against the fire of the Hereafter and its torments.”

10. “The masses will be in need of the *ʿulamā’* even in Paradise.” Someone asked him: “How is this?” He replied: “It will be said to the masses in Paradise: ‘Express your desire for whatever you want.’ They will not know what to do, so they will say: ‘We are going to ask our *ʿulamā’*.’ Obviously this shows the high rank and respect of the *ʿulamā’*.”

Note: In other words, just as the masses are dependent on the *ʿulamā’* to solve their issues (*masā’il*) in this world, they will need the guidance of the *ʿulamā’* in Paradise with regard to its rewards and bounties.

11. “Remain in the company of the *dhākirīn* (those who engage in Allāh’s *dhikr*) because they are workers and guards at the door of the King [Allāh *taʿālā*].”

Note: In other words, if you remain in their company and keep them happy, there will certainly come a time when they will convey you to the King.

12. “Allāh *taʿālā* will expose in public the person who cheats Him in privacy.” (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, p. 79)

Demise

He passed away in Nīshāpūr in 258 A.H.

Hadrat Imām Muslim *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muslim, his father's name is Hajjāj, his title is 'Asākir ad-Dīn, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Husayn. His lineage goes up to the famous Arab tribe, Qushayr.

Birth

He was born in 204 A.H. (*Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 12, p. 558) But in the introduction to his book, *Jāmi' al-Usūl*, Ibn Athīr considers the year 206 A.H. to be more correct. (*Muhaddithīn-e-'Izām*, p. 143)

Journeys for the sake of Hadīth

The science of Hadīth had become most popular around the time when Hadrat Imām Muslim *rahimahullāh* was born. He was fortunate to have been born in Nīshāpūr which, at the time, was the centre of Hadīth.

He commenced listening to Hadīth when he was fourteen years old. He had opportunities to commence earlier, but it seems he deferred it until he acquired full capabilities in this regard. We can gauge from this that he entered this field after observing its pros and cons, and intricacies.

Teachers

There are very few details with regard to his early life. However, senior Hadīth imāms like Is-hāq ibn

Rāhwayh and Imām Dhuhalī were present in Khurāsān and Nīshāpūr.

He went to Baghdad on several occasions and conducted lessons there. His final journey to Baghdad was in 259 A.H., and he passed away two years thereafter. He heard Hadīth from the scholars of Baghdad, e.g. Muhammad ibn Mihrān, Ghassān, etc. In Iraq, he studied under Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* and ʿAbdullāh ibn Maslamah. In the Hijāz, he obtained narrations from Saʿīd ibn Mansūr and others. And in Nīshāpūr, he benefited tremendously from Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh*.

Acknowledgement of his merits

Thousands of erudite scholars were born in that era, many of whom had the honour of studying under Imām Muslim *rahimahullāh*. However, his natural capabilities and powerful memory completely astonished the people, and a great imām like Is-hāq ibn Rāhwayh made the following prediction about him: "Allāh alone knows what heights he will reach."

Character, habits, piety

Imām Muslim *rahimahullāh* never backbit anyone nor was he vulgar and abusive towards anyone during his entire life. He was extremely respectful of his teachers. When he went to Nīshāpūr, he used to regularly attend the classes of Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh*. One day, he was so much affected by his insightful knowledge, asceticism

and piety, that he could not help but kiss him on his forehead, and he said:

يا أستاذ الأستاذين وسيد المحدثين وطبيب الحديث في علله

"O teacher of teachers, chief of the *muhaddithīn*, and physician for the ailments of Hadīth, extend your feet."

His *madh-hab*

It is quite difficult to ascertain his *madh-hab*. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Anwar Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* says: "We do not know his *madh-hab* because the chapters of *Sahīh Muslim* were not arranged by the author himself. It is therefore difficult to ascertain his *madh-hab*." Nawāb Siddīq Hasan Sāhib says that he was a Shāfiʿī. (*Muhaddithīn-e-ʿIzām*, p. 193)

Demise

Someone asked him about a Hadīth on one occasion, and coincidentally, he could not remember it. He went home and became fully occupied in searching for it. While he was busy, a basket of dates was presented to him. He continued eating until he ate everything. He was so engrossed in his inquiry, that he did not even realize he ate all. Anyway, he found the Hadīth, but he felt uncomfortable because of over-eating. This eventually led to his illness. He passed away on the 25th of Rajab 261 A.H. on a Sunday. He was buried outside Nīshāpūr in Nasīrābād. May

Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate his grave. (*Nafʿul Muslim Sharh Sahīh Muslim*, p. 65)

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Khubayq Antākī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad, and his father's name is Khubayq. ʿAllāmah Shaʿrānī, the author of *Tabaqāt Kubrā*, says that his name is Hanīf.

Merits

He is from the rank of the Sufis. He was a great ascetic, very particular about consuming *halāl*, and a pious person in every situation. He was from Kūfah but settled down in Antokia. He followed the way of Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī *rahimahullāh* in *tasawwuf*, and used to spend his time with the latter's *murīds* (disciples).

Statements

1. Fath ibn Shanjazaf narrates that ʿAbdullāh ibn Khubayq said: "O Khurāsānī! There are only four things which are worthy of attention; there is nothing apart from these: (1) eyes, (2) tongue, (3) heart, (4) desires of the self. Monitor your eyes – they must not look at anything unlawful. Monitor your tongue – do not say anything regarding which Allāh *taʿālā* knows that it is not in your heart. Monitor your heart – it must not bear any malice and hatred for any Muslim. Monitor your desires – do not desire any evil. If you do not have these four qualities, you must conclude that you

are a wretched person. So you must throw sand on your head."

Note: Unfortunately, no attention is given to these qualities. Consequently, the conditions are getting worse by the day.

2. "Because a person has no affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*, people do not have affinity with him. If a person becomes attached to Allāh *taʿālā*, all the people will become attached to him."

3. "The most beneficial fear is the one which restrains you from sin. The most beneficial hope is the one which makes good deeds easy for you." (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, p. 84; *Risālah Qushayrīyyah*)

4. "When a *qārī* of the Qur'ān goes towards a sin, the Qur'ān calls out from his chest: 'Is it for this that you abandoned me?' If the sinner were to hear this voice, he would die out of shame and modesty before Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: What an admonitory statement! This is similar to seating a respectable and honourable person in your house, and then humiliating and disrespecting him by going against his orders.

5. "We have heard that an *ʿālim* of the Banū Isrā'īl used to say: 'O my Allāh! I am disobeying You so much but You are not punishing me.' So Allāh *taʿālā* sent revelation to a Prophet of the Banū Isrā'īl to convey to him this message: 'I am

punishing you so much but you are not realizing it. Have I not snatched away the sweetness of your private conversations [*duʿās*, etc.] from you? Is this not a punishment?'"

Note: Unfortunately no one in our times considers this to be a punishment. In fact, if wealth is obtained in unlawful ways by committing thousands of sins, and the person's *Dīn* disappears in the process, he will consider this too to be a grace from Allāh *taʿālā*. And if he has contact with a *buzurg* (pious personality), he will consider his wealth to be the result of the acceptance of the *buzurg's duʿā* and the blessing of his special attention. He does not fear that this wealth may well be a respite. It is therefore essential to rectify such thoughts about the *buzurgs*. May Allāh *taʿālā* rectify and reform us all. Āmīn.

6. "When you are not obedient to your Benefactor, how will you be nice to the one who ill-treats you?" (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 71)

Demise

He passed away in 260 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.[1]

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[1] ʿAllāmah Dhahabī: *Tārīkh al-Islam*, vol. 4, p. 499.

Hadrat Abū Yazīd Tayfūr ibn ʿĪsā Bustāmī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Tayfūr, his father's name is ʿĪsā, his grandfather's name is Sharosān, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Yazīd.

Merits

He was considered to be the chief of the *ʿārifīn* and the ascetics of his time. He enjoyed immense acceptance by the people. His grandfather, Sharosān, was a Magean but embraced Islam later on.

Statements

1. "My happiness lies in fearing Allāh *taʿālā* because if I am not secure from His punishment, how can I be happy?"

Note: In other words, happiness is in fearing Allāh *taʿālā*, and not in being unafraid.

2. "O Allāh! There is nothing to be astonished about if I love You because I am a poor slave. But if You love me, it is most surprising because You have power over everything."

3. Someone said to him: "You are able to fly!" He replied: "It is not something to be astonished about because birds which eat carrion also fly in the air. So what exclusivity and miracle is it in me?"

4. Someone asked him: "Tell us what the *Ism-e-Aʿẓam* (the unique name of Allāh *taʿālā*) is?" He replied: "It cannot be specified. All you have to do is empty your heart for the oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*. Once you have achieved this, you can make *duʿā* to Him with any of His names and He will accept your *duʿā*."

5. "Some of Allāh's servants walk on water, but they are of no rank in Allāh's sight. As you know, some people have been given the supernatural feat of being able to fly. But do not be deceived by this feat until you check if he upholds the orders, prohibitions and limits of the Sharīʿah." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how he explained the sign of *wilāyat* and *buzurgī* (being a close friend of Allāh *taʿālā*). This has to be born in mind especially in our times so that we can differentiate between a *walī* and a non-*walī*. If he does not follow the dictates of the Sharīʿah, his flying is not a *karāmat* (supernatural feat) but *istidrāj* (respite given by Allāh *taʿālā* until the person is given his punishment in full if he does not mend his ways).

6. "I spent thirty years in *mujāhadah* (striving and toiling) and I found knowledge and following it to be the most difficult for a person."

Note: This shows the greatness of knowledge, but its importance has decreased in the minds of people.

7. “Allāh *taʿālā* showered His bounties on His servants so that they may turn to Him. Unfortunately they became engrossed in them and became heedless of Allāh *taʿālā*.”

8. “O Allāh! You created this creation [man] without any action of his, and You made him responsible for a serious trust. If You do not help him, who is there who will help him?”

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is a statement which portrays real servitude. It is the fruit of deep knowledge and *maʿrifat*.

9. Someone asked him about what is Sunnah and what is a *farīdah* (an essential duty). So he said: “Sunnah is to cast aside the world completely. And it is a *farīdah* to remain in Allāh’s *maʿīyyat* (in close proximity with Allāh *taʿālā*). This is because the Sunnah in its entirety teaches casting aside the world, while the Qur’ān in its entirety guides us towards *suhbat-e-Maulā* (being in the companionship of Allāh *taʿālā*).”

Note: In other words, we must have full conviction in the *maʿīyyat* of Allāh *taʿālā* at every breath.

10. “I saw Allāh *taʿālā* in a dream, so I asked Him: ‘How can I reach You?’ Allāh *taʿālā* said: ‘Separate yourself from your *nafs* and come to Me.’”

11. Someone asked him: “What is the description of an *ʿārif*?” He said: “He is like the people of Hell who will neither die nor live.”

Note: This means that an *ʿārif* remains between fear and hope (*khauf wa rajāʾ*).

12. He was asked about a *mutawāḏiʿ* (humble person), so he said: “A *mutawāḏiʿ* is one who neither sees any position for himself nor any condition. And he does not find anyone worse than him from the creation.”

13. An *ʿālim* and jurist of the city went to him and asked: “From whom and from where did you acquire this knowledge?” He replied: “This knowledge of mine is a gift from Allāh *taʿālā* and it is from Him. And it is from that path regarding which Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: ‘When a person practises on his knowledge, Allāh *taʿālā* will make him inherit knowledge which he did not have.’” On hearing this, the jurist remained silent.

Demise

He passed away in 261 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Ṯabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 66)

Hadrat Abul Fawāris Shāh ibn Shujāʿ Kurmānī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Shāh, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Fawāris, and his father's name is Shujāʿ Kurmānī.

Merits

He was a shaykh-e-Tarīqah and one of the companions of Abū Hafs *quddisa sirruhu*. He was also a class fellow of Shaykh Abū Turāb Nakhshabī, Shaykh ʿAbdullāh and others. He has the honour of being the teacher of Abū ʿUthmān Hiyarī *rahimahullāh*. He would always wear a cloak and would sometimes wear an embossed sheet. He was a man of great piety.

Khwājah Yahyā ʿUmmār *quddisa sirruhu* says: "In those days, a person who was a king and had a throne was referred to as a 'shāh'. Shaykh Abū Hafs *rahimahullāh* was in Nīshāpūr one day when Shāh Shujāʿ stood up in front of him. Shāh Shujāʿ was wearing a cloak at the time. He asked him certain things, so Shaykh Abū Hafs raised his head to look at him and noticed that he was wearing a cloak. So he said: 'By Allāh, you are Shāh Shujāʿ.' He replied: 'I am a shāh.' He thus acknowledged that he was a shāh."

Shāh Shujāʿ was in his assembly one day when a fakir came by and asked for two *rotīs*, but no one gave him. Shāh Shujāʿ said: "Is there anyone who will purchase two *rotīs* in exchange for the fifty

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hajj which I performed, and I will give the *rotīs* to him?" A jurist who was present there said: "O shaykh! You are showing disregard for the Sharīʿah." He replied: "If I myself have no value and worth, how can I attach any value and worth to my deeds?" The jurist was silenced.

Statements

1. "The person who shut his eyes from the forbidden, stopped his *nafs* from desires, spent every moment of his internal self in *murāqabah* (meditation of Allāh *taʿālā*), and imposed his external self to follow the Sunnah – his intellect and intelligence will never err." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 248)

2. "If a person decides to remain in your company but follows you when it is to his liking and goes against you when it is not to his liking, then you must conclude that he chose to remain in your company merely to satisfy his *nafs*, and he only desired the comforts of this world from your company."

3. "The merits of a person are only with him for as long as he does not look at them. In like manner, the people of *wilāyat* (close friendship with Allāh *taʿālā*) will have their *wilāyat* for as long as they do not look at it. The moment a person looks at his *wilāyat* and considers himself to be a *walī*, his *wilāyat* will not remain with him any longer."

4. “Love for the *auliyā’* of Allāh *taʿālā* is a great act of worship. The person who loves the *auliyā’* has actually loved Allāh *taʿālā*. And Allāh *taʿālā* loves the one whom the *auliyā’* love.” (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 77)

Demise

He passed away in 270 A.H. or before 300 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 248)

Hadrat Abū Hafs 'Amr ibn Sālim al-Haddād Nīshāpūrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is 'Amr, his father's name is Sālim al-Haddād, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Hafs.

Merits

He was from among the senior *mashā'ikh* who was an ascetic, ardent worshipper, and a very pious and righteous person. When he used to engage in Allāh's *dhikr*, his condition would change completely. Those who were near him would notice these changes.

A treatment for anger

Sulamī relates: "I heard my grandfather saying: 'When Abū Hafs used to get angry, he would start talking about good character until his anger subsided. He would then revert to his original topic of discussion.'"

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent treatment. The fact of the matter is that when a genuine seeker desires his rectification and reformation, Allāh *ta'ālā* – the absolute guide – directs him towards a cure and treatment.

Statements

1. "If a person does not gauge his actions and conditions against the teachings of the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and his heart is not concerned

about its rectification and reformation, then do not include him among the righteous."

2. "External good characteristics are indications of internal good characteristics." (*Sifatus Safwah*, vol. 4, p. 118)

Note: This is why it is said:

الظاهر عنوان الباطن

"The external gives an indication of the internal."

May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to rectify our external and internal selves. Āmīn.

3. Someone asked him about the etiquette of the Sufis. He said: "(1) To uphold the sanctity of the *mashā'ikh*, (2) good social conduct with one's brothers, (3) advice to juniors, (4) to abstain from disputes at times of benefit, (5) to be particular about giving preference to others over one's self, (6) to abstain from accumulating wealth, (7) to abstain from the companionship of those who are not of the Tarīq, (8) to help and assist ones brothers in matters of this world and the Hereafter.

Now gauge yourself against these qualities. If they are all found in you, then you really are a Sufi." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 70)

Note: Glory to Allāh! These eight etiquette are excellent. It is essential for not only every *sālik*

but for every Muslim to bear them in mind. Now ponder over these principles and check which one is against the Sharīʿah? The merits of each one is found in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us all to imbibe these etiquette, and may He bless us with His proximity and acceptance.

4. "Sinning is a prelude to *kufr* (unbelief) just as a fever is a prelude to death."

5. "Good external character is an indication of good internal character."

6. "Genuine courage entails being just with people but not demanding justice from them." (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, p. 81)

Demise

He passed away in 270 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 70)

Hadrat Hamdūn ibn Ahmad al-Qassār Nīshāpūrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Hamdūn, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Sālih, his father's name is Ahmad al-Qassār, and he hails from Nīshāpūr.

Merits

He is a shaykh and leader of the group of Sufis. He would not worry too much about beautifying himself externally, but was particular about embellishing his internal self and adhering to the Sharīʿah. He remained in the company of Abū Turāb and Abū Hafs Nīshāpūrī. He was an *abdāl*.

Statements

1. "The person who is terrified and restless because of a calamity is actually accusing Allāh *taʿālā*." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 13, p. 50)

Note: A calamity is from Allāh *taʿālā*. Why, then, should a person complain? Why should he be terrified and restless? May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us all. Āmīn.

2. "The person who considers his self to be better than Pharaoh's has displayed pride."

3. "The person who studies the lives of the pious elders will be blessed with the ability to recognize his shortcomings, and will begin to acknowledge

that he is far behind the lofty ranks of those who were on the true path."

Note: This is really a very great benefit of studying the lives of the pious elders. A person learns of his own shortcomings and faults, and this realization becomes a stepping stone to progress in rank. Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* describes this as follows: "The one who recognizes and realizes his shortcomings and faults will run speedily towards perfection."

4. Someone asked him: "How is it that the speech of the pious predecessors used to be more beneficial than our speech?" He replied: "They spoke for Islam's honour, the salvation of people, and the pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā*. On the other hand, we speak for our own honour, out of quest for this world, and to make people our ardent followers."

Note: Obviously, the fruits of our efforts will depend on our intention. Hadrat Maulānā Abul Wafā' Shāhjahānpūrī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* posed a similar question to Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* when he asked: "More talks and lectures are delivered in our times as opposed to past times. Yet the benefit and effect appear less." Hadrat responded spontaneously: "There is no sincerity." In other words, fewer talks were given in the past, but there was sincerity. This is why they were more effective. But this is not found today.

5. “The beauty of a Sufi lies in his humility. If he acts proudly, his pride will be worse than the pride of a wealthy person.”

6. ʿAbdullāh ibn Manāzil asked him for advice, so he said: “As far as possible, do not become angry because of a worldly thing or matter.”

Demise

He passed away in 271 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, p. 86)

Hadrat Imām Abū Dā'ūd *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Sulaymān, his father's name is Ashʿath, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Dā'ūd. He was born in Sīstān in 202 A.H.

Journeys for the sake of knowledge

There are very few details about his early life, however, the era in which he was born was when the circle of Hadīth had become very wide. This is why he travelled to different lands. He had the honour of studying under the famous teachers and *mashā'ikh* of the time.

Teachers

It is not possible to count all the teachers under whom Imām Abū Dā'ūd *rahimahullāh* studied. According to one estimate, he studied under 300 teachers and *shuyūkh*. Hadrat Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* is from among them.

Asceticism and piety

He was unique in his acumen, knowledge, memorization of Hadīth, asceticism, worship, conviction and reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*. There is a famous story about him: The *kurtah* which he used to wear had one sleeve which was narrow, and the other which was broad. When he was asked the reason for this, he said: "I place my written documents in one sleeve, this is why I made it broad. As for the other one, there is

neither any need to have it broad nor any benefit. This is why I left it narrow."

His walking and demeanour were very similar to his teacher's, Hadrat Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh*.

Acknowledgement of his merits

The distinguished position which Imām Abū Dā'ūd *rahimahullāh* held as regards knowledge and practice was fully acknowledged by the *'ulamā'* and *mashā'ikh* of his time. Hāfiz Mūsā ibn Ibrāhīm says: "Imām Abū Dā'ūd *rahimahullāh* was born for Hadīth in this world, and for Paradise in the Hereafter. I have not seen anyone superior to him." The following statement of Imām Ibrāhīm Harbī *rahimahullāh* with regard to Imām Abū Dā'ūd *rahimahullāh* is well-known: "Hadīth was made soft for him just as steel was made soft for Hadrat Dā'ūd *'alayhis salām*."

His *madh-hab*

The *'ulamā'* have different views with regard to his *madh-hab*. Some are of the opinion that he was a Hambalī while others say he was a Shāfi'ī. However, from a study of his *Sunan*, it is gauged that he was a Hambalī. His *Sunan* is the most important of his written works.

The status of his *Sunan* among the *Sihāh Sittah*

The compilers of the *Sihāh Sittah* (six most authentic collections of Hadīth) compiled their books according to their personal tastes and inclinations. Imām Abū Dā'ūd *rahimahullāh* made

the proofs and evidences of the imāms the main theme of his book.

Hadrat Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* ranks the *Sunan* of Imām Abū Dāʾūd *rahimahullāh* in the second level of Hadīth collections. However, the author of *Miftāh as-Saʿādah* ranks them as follows: (1) *Sahīh Bukhārī*, (2) *Sahīh Muslim*, (3) *Sunan Abī Dāʾūd*.

Number of narrations

Imām Abū Dāʾūd *rahimahullāh* selected 4 800 Ahādīth from a total of 500 000 narrations. In addition to this, it also contains 600 *mursal*[1] Ahādīth. All the imāms apart from Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* consider *mursal* Ahādīth to be acceptable as proofs.

Demise

He passed away in 271 A.H. in Baghdad. According to another view, he passed away on a Friday in 275 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Muhaddithīn-e-ʿIzām*, p. 163)

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[1] A *mursal* Hadīth is one in which the first transmitter, a Sahābī, is missing from the chain.

Hadrat Imām Ibn Mājah *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Yazīd, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū 'Abdillāh, his *nisbat* (attribution) is ar-Rib'ī al-Qazawīnī, and he is known as Ibn Mājah. There is difference of opinion with regard to Mājah. Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* says that the correct view is that it is his mother's name.

He was born in 209 A.H.

Journeys for the sake of Hadīth

It is estimated that his journeys for Hadīth commenced in 230 A.H. This was a time when the science of Hadīth had reached its peak. He travelled to different cities in search of Hadīth. The historian, Ibn Khalikān, writes that he travelled to Iraq, Basra, Kūfah, Baghdad, Makkah, Shām, Egypt and Rayy for the sake of Hadīth.

Teachers and students

It is difficult to identify all his teachers, but he derived special benefit from Abū Bakr ibn Shaybah. The students of Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Layth *rahimahullāh* were from among his teachers. The list of his students is also very long.

The *'ulamā'* acknowledge his merits

'Ulamā' and biographers of every era acknowledge his merits, acumen, seniority, and memorization of Hadīth. The historian, Ibn Khalikān, describes him as follows:

كان إماما في الحديث عارفا بعلومه وجميع ما يتعلق

"He was an imām in Hadīth. He had full knowledge of its sciences and everything else related to it."

'Allāmah Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* writes: "Abū 'Abdillāh Muhammad ibn Yazīd ibn Mājah is the author of the famous *Sunan*. This book is a proof of his vast knowledge, insightful actions, and emulation of the principles and subsidiary matters."

The *muhaddith*, Abū Ya'lā Khalīlī writes: "Ibn Mājah is unanimously accepted as a reliable scholar, and he is an accepted authority in the memorization and knowledge of the science of Hadīth."

'Allāmah Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes: "He was a *hāfiz-e-Hadīth*, a trustworthy narrator, and possessed vast knowledge."

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* refers to him as one of the imāms, and a *hāfiz-e-Hadīth.*

His *madh-hab*

ʿAllāmah Tāhir Jazā'irī says that Ibn Mājah did not follow any of the *ʿulamā'* and *mujtahid* imāms. However, he was inclined to the views of Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh*, Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh*, Is-hāq, and Abū ʿUbaydah. In other words, in comparison to the *madh-hab* of the scholars of Iraq, he was more inclined to those of the Hijāz. This is also gauged from a study of his book.

Demise

He passed away on 22 Ramadān al-Mubārak 273 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Muhaddithīn-e-ʿIzām*, p. 226)

Hadrat Fath ibn Shanjazaf Marwazī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Fath, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Nasr, and he is from among the early *mashā'ikh* of Khurāsān. He was a resident of Marwaz, a city in Khurāsān. Shaykh 'Abdullāh ibn Ahmad Hambal *rahimahullāh* says: "No person of asceticism and lofty spiritual conditions like Fath was born in Khurāsān. He lived in Baghdad for thirteen years but did not eat any of the foods which were grown there. He used to obtain *sattū* (barley parched and ground and made into paste) from Antokia, and suffice with it.

A strange conversation

When he was in the throes of death, he began speaking softly. When people placed their ears near him, he was saying:

إِلَهِيْ اِشْتَدَّ شَوْقِيْ إِلَيْكَ، فَعَجِّلْ قُدُوْمِيْ عَلَيْكَ

"O my Allāh! My desire to come to You has intensified, so hasten my coming to You."

When people were giving the *ghusl* (the bath given to a deceased person), they noticed that the main vein of his shank had protruded and changed course to read [the words]: *al-fath lillāh* (victory is for Allāh).

Shaykh al-Islam *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* says: Shaykh Ibrāhīm <u>H</u>arbī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* related to me saying: "I was present at the time, and I personally read these words." His wide acceptance can be gauged from the fact that his *janāzah <u>s</u>alāh* was performed 33 times because about 30 000 people attended his funeral.

<u>Demise</u>

He passed away on 15 Shaʿbān 273 A.H. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. (*Nafa<u>h</u>ātul Uns*, p. 199)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Muhammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Maghribī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and his father's name is Ismāʿīl.

Merits

He remained in the company of ʿAlī ibn Razīn, and was the teacher of Hadrat Ibrāhīm Khawwās and Ibrāhīm ibn Shaybān. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 99)

He performed hajj on foot several times. He used to walk bare-footed in the darkness of the night without any fear or hesitation, as though he was walking in broad daylight. Other walkers would follow him and he would show them the way. Although he used to walk barefoot so much, his feet were soft and tender like those of a bride. He used to bear this striving for Allāh's sake. (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, p. 15)

He was one of the *muhaqqiqīn* (erudite research scholars) of his time. He explained consistent points, and would make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* and seek His help in accordance with the Sharīʿah and Tarīqah.

Statements

1. "The *Ahlullāh* (close friends of Allāh *taʿālā*) are of three types:

1. Those from whom calamities are kept far so that calamities do not overpower their patience. This is done so that they do not consider Allāh's orders to be unacceptable, and their hearts do not have any ill-feelings towards His decrees.

2. Those who are kept far from sinners so that their hearts may remain at peace with the world. They must be occupied with Allāh *taʿālā* in comfort and peace, and they must not become despondent and grieved by interaction with sinners.

3. Those who are completely put through calamities and difficulties. They are patient over all this and pleased with Allāh's decree. Consequently, they love Him more, and accept His orders."

2. "There are some servants of Allāh *taʿālā* whom He honoured repeatedly, bestowed them with internal and external knowledge, and made them bearers of His *dhikr*."

3. "The best deed is to spend one's time doing deeds in accordance with the Sharīʿah."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent decision. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to carry out this best of deeds. Āmīn. ʿAllāmah Muhīyy ad-Dīn Nawawī *rahimahullāh* has written in *Kitāb al-Adhkār* that the best condition of a servant is when he is

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occupied in the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*. This is because His *dhikr* is the best of deeds.

4. "The most despicable person is the poor person who shows off for the sake of wealthy people, or displays humility for the sake of wealthy people. The most honourable is the wealthy person who humbles himself before a poor person, and protects the poor person's dignity."

Note: This teaching is expressed in the following Hadīth:

نعم الأمير على باب الفقير

"The best wealthy person is the one who goes to the poor."

5. "Those who are pleased with their poverty are the trustworthy agents of Allāh *taʿālā* on earth, they are proofs against their fellow humans, and the rest of the creation is safeguarded against calamities because of them." (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 10, p. 357)

6. "A Sufi and a fakir is one who has no refuge in the world apart from Allāh *taʿālā*." (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*)

Note: This was the condition of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow this lofty condition to all of us.

7. “There are some servants of Allāh *taʿālā* whom He bestowed with internal and external knowledge. But Allāh *taʿālā* kept them so anonymous that they are not listed or mentioned among the *ʿulamā’*. Peace is really for such people, they are the truly guided ones, and it is they who are protected against tribulations.”

Demise

He passed away in 279 A.H. at the age of 120. He was buried with his teacher, ʿAlī ibn Razīn. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 79)

Hadrat Imām Tirmidhī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is 'Īsā, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū 'Īsā. He was born in Tirmīdh in 209 A.H.

Journeys for the sake of knowledge

When he reached an age of understanding, he was overcome with a desire to learn the science of Hadīth. Consequently, he travelled to different regions, areas and countries for this purpose.

Teachers

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* and Imām Muslim *rahimahullāh* are from among his teachers. He benefited the most from Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh*. 'Allāmah Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes:

تفقّه في الحديث بالبخاري

"He acquired a deep understanding of Hadīth under Bukhārī."

He is listed among the prominent students of Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh*. Hākim *rahimahullāh* quotes this statement of Mūsā ibn 'Ilk:

مات البخاري فلم يُخلف بخراسان مثلَ أبي عيسى في العلم والحفظ والورع والزهد

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"When Imām Bukhārī departed from this world, he did not leave behind anyone like Abū ʿĪsā [Imām Tirmidhī] in Khurāsān as regards knowledge, memory, asceticism, and abstention."

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* himself was proud of his student. He praised his student's knowledge as follows:

مَا انْتَفَعْتُ بِكَ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا انْتَفَعْتَ بِي

"I benefited from you equal to how much you benefited from me."

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī *rahimahullāh* says: "This means that when an intelligent student poses a question to his teacher, he has to think of other sciences, and in this way he benefits from the student."

Memory

When Allāh *taʿālā* wills to take some work from a person, He provides him with the means for it. Just as he had the opportunity of benefiting from senior *muhaddithīn*, Allāh *taʿālā* blessed him with a strong memory [to remember what he learnt from them]. Abū Saʿīd Idrīsī says: "The memory of Abū ʿĪsā is used as a parable."

Piety and asceticism

His piety and asceticism were of a very high level – a level beyond it could not be imagined. He used

to cry constantly out of Allāh's *taʿālā* fear. This caused him to lose his eyesight.

Written works

He wrote many books, and was quite proficient in the fields of *fiqh* and *tafsīr* as well. His most popular work is his *Jāmiʿ* [*Tirmidhī Sharīf*] which is included in the syllabus of Dār al-ʿUlūms. He also wrote other books such as *al-ʿIlal, al-Mufrad, at-Tārīkh, az-Zuhd, ash-Shamā'il.*

Demise

He passed away in 279 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Muhaddithīn ʿIzām*, p. 183)

Hadrat Abū Saʿīd Ahmad ibn ʿĪsā al-Khazzāz *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his father's name is ʿĪsā, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Saʿīd.

Merits

He was a resident of Baghdad. He remained in the company of Dhun Nūn Misrī *rahimahullāh*. He was the first to delve into the subject of fleeting and eternal knowledge. He was a shaykh of the Sufis of his time, and an imām of the people in all sciences. At the time, he was the most eloquent in speech apart from Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*.

Note: We learn from this that it is not a flaw to express what is in your heart in an eloquent manner. Rather, it is a sign of perfection. Resorting to eloquent speech creates more enthusiasm and concentration in the readers and listeners.

Statements

1. "The person whose internal self is different from his beautiful exterior is a useless person."

Note: It is essential on every person to try to create a harmony between the two. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* made *duʿā* for the goodness of both. He said"

أَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْ سَرِيْرَتِيْ خَيْرًا مِنْ عَلَانِيَتِيْ، وَاجْعَلْ عَلَانِيَتِيْ صَالِحَةً

"O Allāh! Make my inner self better than my outer self. And make my outer self righteous."

2. "In the beginning of repentance (*taubah*), a person first experiences fear. This then turns towards hope, followed by the rank of the righteous (*sāliḥīn*), then the rank of *murīdīn* (those desirous of Allāh *taʿālā*), then the rank of *muṭīʿīn* (those obedient to Allāh *taʿālā*), followed by the rank of *muḥibbīn* (those who love Allāh *taʿālā*), then the rank of *mushtāqīn* (those yearning for Allāh *taʿālā*), followed by the rank of *auliyā'* (true friends of Allāh *taʿālā*), and finally the rank of *muqarrabīn* (those in close proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*)." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 13, p. 419)

3. 'Allāmah Qushayrī *raḥimahullāh* quotes in his book, *Risālah Qushayrīyyah*, that Abul 'Abbās aṣ-Ṣayyād relates from Abū Saʿīd Khazzāz who said: "I saw Satan in a dream passing by me at a distant shore. I shouted out to him saying: 'Hey, come here. Why are you passing by from so far away?' He replied: 'What can I do to you people? You have stayed far away from the thing with which I used to deceive people.' I asked: 'What is that thing?' He replied: 'The world.' He added: 'However, there is one subtle thing in you people which is in my favour.' I asked: 'What is that.' He replied: 'The companionship of youngsters.'"

Note: This shows that we should strictly abstain from the companionship of young boys.

4. "I spent a considerable amount of time with the Sufis but no disputes arose between them and me." He was asked: "How come?" He replied: "I used to remain with them, but act against my *nafs*." (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, p. 99)

5. "I met a person who appeared to be a *majnūn* (lunatic). So I addressed him saying: 'O *majnūn*!' He turned towards me and said: 'Do you know who a *majnūn* is?' I replied: 'No.' He said: 'A real *majnūn* is one who takes a step without engaging in Allāh's *dhikr*.'"

6. "A person is not blessed with honour as long as *dhikr* is not his food, and the soil is not his bed."

7. He was asked: "How is it that the Sufis also bear malice and hatred for each other, whereas they have no value for positions of authority and leadership?" He replied: "Allāh *taʿālā* decreed this for them out of *ghayrah* so that they do not leave Him and obtain peace and consolation from others. But once they reach perfection in *sulūk*, the malice comes to an end. This is why a *kāmil* person (one who reached the high levels of spiritual perfection) does not consider it permissible to give vent to his anger on any of the creation."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What words of cognition which are absolutely correct. People generally

make this objection about the mutual hatred and malice among the Sufis and fakirs. The shaykh provided an Allāh-inspired reply to it. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him.

Demise

He passed away in 279 A.H. (*Tabaqāt*) But the book, *Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'* states that he passed away in 286 A.H. or 277 A.H.

Hadrat ʿAlī ibn Sahl ibn al-Aṯ-har Asfahānī *raḥimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAlī, his father's name is Sahl, his grandfather's name is al-Aṯ-har, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Ḥasan.

Merits

He is from the second level of *mashā'ikh*, and is a senior shaykh of Isfahān. He was a student of Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf an-Nahār, and a contemporary of Shaykh Junayd *raḥimahullāh*. The two used to correspond with each other. He also benefited from the company of Ḥadrat Abū Turāb Nakhshabī. He used to engage in a lot of spiritual exercises. He would very often abstain from food and drink for twenty days at a time. He would spend entire nights in worship. He was brought up in a very affluent home with many comforts and luxuries.

His open-heartedness

Shaykh ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān Makkī fell into a debt of 30 000 dirhams. He came to Shaykh ʿAlī ibn Sahl in Isfahān to obtain some money from him. After hearing the extent of his debt, Shaykh ʿAlī ibn Sahl sent the amount secretly to Shaykh ʿAmr's creditor in Makkah. Shaykh ʿAlī then bid him farewell with much honour and respect. By the time he left Isfahān, his debt had been repaid. But because he did not know about it, he was

worried about its repayment throughout the journey. Once he reached Makkah Muʿazzamah, he came to know of its repayment, and his concern disappeared. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 272)

The *Tabaqāt* states that he is from among the old *mashā'ikh* of Isfahān, and that he used to correspond with Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh*. It was his habit to pay off debts for fellow Muslims without their knowledge. The creditor would then go to the person and say to him: "Your debt has been paid off by Allāh *taʿālā*." The astonishing thing about all this is that people only came to know of this practice after he passed away.

Note: Glory to Allāh! These were the true qualities of kindness and concern of our elders for their Muslim brothers. Moreover, they would neither count their favours nor mention them. It also shows the sincere relationship which they had with Allāh *taʿālā*. They did not bother whether people came to know of their acts of kindness or not. They had full conviction in reward from Allāh *taʿālā*. And this is certainly enough.

Statements

1. "It is *harām* for the heart of an *ʿārif billāh* (one who has truly recognized Allāh *taʿālā*) to get solace from anyone other than Allāh *taʿālā*. If he does this, he will be punished."

2. He used to say to his companions: "Seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from being internally corrupt through good deeds." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 80)

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Note: This is because we do not know whether it will be accepted by Allāh *taʿālā* or not.

3. "Allāh *taʿālā* may have given the wealthy people exquisite clothing, but he gave the Sufis lustre and purity in their clothes which is not found in the clothing of the wealthy. In like manner, He may have given the wealthy exotic and expensive foods, but He gave the Sufis true enjoyment and deliciousness in their food."

Note: When King Jahāngīr went to visit Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* in Sirhind, he presented some food to him. King Jahāngīr said to him: "I experienced such enjoyment in this *khānqāh* food which I never experienced from my royal kitchen." Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say to those who used to come to him: "You must eat the *khānqāh* food because there is a special effulgence in it."

4. "Allāh *taʿālā* will protect us against the decay of internal spiritual conditions by virtue of good deeds."

Note: In other words, He will protect us against conceit and arrogance.

5. He used to say with regard to *tauhīd* (oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*):

اَللّٰهُ قَرِيْبٌ مِنَ الظُّنُوْنِ وَبَعِيْدٌ مِنَ الْحَقَائِقِ

"Allāh taʿālā is near as regards thoughts, but far as regards realities."

6. "My death is not like yours. It is merely a proposal and an acceptance." And this is how it happened. He was seated with a group of Sufis when he suddenly said: "*Labbayk*" and fell down dead.

Note: In others, he received a sudden call to come, he said, "Here I am", and he departed from this world. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

He passed away in 280 A.H. in Isfahān and was buried there. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 272)

Hadrat Abū Muhammad Sahl ibn ʿAbdillāh Tusturī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Sahl, his father's name is ʿAbdullāh Tusturī, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad. He was a contemporary of Sayyid at-Tā'ifah Shaykh Junayd *rahimahullāh*, and one of the senior *ʿulamā'* of his time. He delved into the subjects of sincerity, spiritual exercises, and internal actions. He was born in 203 A.H. and lived for 80 years.

Statements

1. Someone asked him: "What are the signs of wretchedness?" He replied: "(1) When Allāh *taʿālā* blesses you with knowledge but not the inspiration (*taufīq*) of practising on it. (2) When He enables you to practise on it, He gives you no sincerity in your actions. Consequently, your deeds go to waste, and are destroyed. (3) He gives you opportunities to visit the righteous and remain in their company, but not the *taufīq* to accept [their teachings]."

2. He used to say:

ما دمت تخاف الفقر فأنت منافق

"As long as you fear poverty, you will remain a hypocrite."

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Note: In other words, *īmān* and *ikhlās* (sincerity and devotion to Allāh *taʿālā*) demand that you remain content and happy with whatever Allāh *taʿālā* gives you. Anything against this is hypocrisy.

3. "If the sweetness which a Sufi experiences in his heart because of praises of people is not removed [from his heart], he will never be successful."

Note: Because this is a sign of self-conceit and ostentation. How can a person be successful and triumphant in the presence of self-conceit and ostentation?

4. Shaykh Sahl had a young *murīd* whose beard had not appeared as yet. He requested Shaykh Sahl for a beard. He said: "Show me with your hand how long a beard you want." When he showed him the length which he desired, his beard appeared there and then. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 225)

Note: Glory to Allāh! This was a clear *karāmat* of the shaykh and is a genuine reality. The *Sharh Aqā'id* of Nasafī *rahimahullāh* states:

كَرَامَاتُ الْأَوْلِيَاءِ حَقٌّ

"The karāmāt (supernatural feats) of the auliyā' are genuine realities."

5. “The people are asleep at present. They will wake up when they die. When they wake up, they will regret, but it will be of not benefit to them.”

Note: This is a very admonitory statement. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to practise accordingly. Āmīn.

6. “The person who is free of evil thoughts about others will be free from spying. The person who is free of spying will be free from backbiting. The person who is free of backbiting will be free from lying. The person who is free from lying will be free from slander.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent sequence. He considers evil thoughts about others (*sū’ az-zann*) to be the basis of everything else. Allāh *taʿālā* too prohibits us from *sū’ az-zann* before prohibiting us from spying and backbiting. Allāh *taʿālā* says in Sūrah al-Hujurāt:

يَآ أَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوْا كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ

“O believers! Abstain from much suspicion.” (Sūrah al-Hujurāt, 49: 12)

Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* also provides the same sequence. He says: “You first get suspicion, followed by spying and backbiting.” Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* liked this sequence of Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* a lot.

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7. “A person cannot be eligible for leadership (1) as long as he does not keep the people safe from his ignorance, (2) he himself does not tolerate their ignorance, (3) he does not leave the money and wealth which is under their control, and (4) he does not spend the wealth which is under his control.”

Note: However, the situation is such that although people do not possess these qualities, each one seems to be desirous of leadership. Some of them even acquire it through deception. But the consequences of this is obvious – there is corruption everywhere. Allāh *taʿālā* says: “The land has become constricted on them despite its vastness.”

8. “One of the characteristics of the *siddīqīn* is that they do not take any oaths – true or false – in Allāh’s *taʿālā* name. They neither backbite nor do they tolerate any backbiting in their presence. The do not eat to their full, and they do not go against their word.”

Note: These are qualities of the *siddīqīn* but people consider them to be trivial. Their entire life may pass by, but they will remain totally devoid of these qualities.

9. “We have seven principles:

1) To hold on firmly to the Book of Allāh *taʿālā*.

2) To follow the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*
3) To eat what is *halāl.*
4) To abstain from causing any harm to anyone.
5) To abstain from sinning.
6) To repent.
7) To fulfil rights."

Note: These principles are obviously in strict accordance with the Sharīʿah. How, then, can *tasawwuf* be rejected and labelled a *bidʿah*!?

10. "If a person follows the laws of Allāh *taʿālā* during times of worldly and religious corruption, and times of mutual conflict and disputes; Allāh *taʿālā* will make him the imām of his time. People will follow him and appoint him as their guide whereas he may have been unknown before this."

11. "There will come a time when *halāl* and wholesome food will leave the wealthy people, and they will acquire *harām* wealth through unlawful means. Allāh *taʿālā* will cause them to commit excesses against each other, and present their disputes and cases to the rulers. This will cause their lives to become unpleasant, their hearts to be filled with worldly poverty and need, and their enemies to rejoice over their mishaps. It will also be a time when slaves and labourers will enjoy themselves, while their masters and employers will experience difficulty, hardship and fear of oppressors. A good life will only be enjoyed by a hypocrite who will not bother in the least from

where he obtains his wealth, where he spends it, and how he is destroying himself in the process. It will be a time when the rank of the *ʿulamā'* will be like the ignoramuses, their lifestyle will be like immoral people, and their death will be like those who are astray and confused."

Note: We can say with certainty that our time is the time as described above. The same retrogressive condition is found in the masses and *ʿulamā'* as described in this statement. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us all. Āmīn.

12. "Glad tidings to those who recognized the *auliyā'* of Allāh *taʿālā* because once these people have acquired true *maʿrifat* (recognition), the acts of obedience which they missed out in the past will be made up for. Even if they do not make up for the missed good deeds, the least the *auliyā'* will do for them is intercede on their behalf before Allāh *taʿālā*. This is because they [*auliyā'*] are big-hearted people."

13. "People are denied and deprived of witnessing the grand power of Allāh *taʿālā* and of reaching Him because of eating *harām* and oppressing Allāh's creation." May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us.

14. "As long as the *nafs* has the desire to commit sin, you must discipline it with hunger and thirst. Once the *nafs* gives up the desire to commit sin (i.e. once it becomes *nafs-e-mutma'innah*), you may feed it whatever it desires, and allow it to sleep for as long as it desires."

15. “The hearts which are dead can only be brought back to life when they engage in the *dhikr* of the Being who is *Hayy* (the eternally living).”

16. “The person whose *īmān* becomes perfect does not fear anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā*.”

Demise

He passed away in 283 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt Kubrā*, vol. 1, pp. 66-68)

Hadrat Abū Hamzah Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Ibrāhīm, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Hamzah. He was a jurist and possessed knowledge of the Qur'ān. He remained in the company of Surī Saqatī *rahimahullāh* and other similar *mashā'ikh*.

Statements

1. "It is extremely difficult to impose poverty [on one's self]. None but a *siddīq* can exercise patience over it."

2. "It is impossible to love Allāh *ta'ālā* while not engaging in His *dhikr*. It is also not possible that you engage in His *dhikr* and He does not bestow you with the enjoyment of *dhikr*. Furthermore, it is not possible that He bestows you with the enjoyment of His *dhikr* and allows you to become occupied with anyone apart from Him."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What words of wisdom. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable us to engage in His *dhikr*.

"When Allāh *ta'ālā* opens the door of good for you, hold on firmly to it. But you must not look at it with conceit nor must you gloat over it. Instead, you must remain occupied in showing gratitude to the One [Allāh *ta'ālā*] who inspired you to do good and acts of piety. If you look at it with conceit and vex pride over it, you will fall from

your lofty position. But if you remain grateful for it, you will be given more of it. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيْدَنَّكُمْ

"If you are grateful, I will give you more."

This is irrespective of whether it is a physical bounty or a spiritual one.

3. "When a person knows and recognizes the true path, it becomes easy for him to traverse it. The truth path is the one shown by Allāh *taʿālā*. As for the one who learns the true path through proofs and evidences, he may err or be correct in identifying it. You must understand that there is no guide for Allāh's path apart from following the words and conditions of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 85)

Note: Allāh *taʿālā* explains this fact Himself when He says:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّوْنَ اللهَ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللهُ

"Say: If you love Allāh, follow me and Allāh will love you."

Hadrat Sayyidunā ʿAbd al-Quddūs Gangohī *rahimahullāh* explains this verse as follows in *Latā'if Quddūsī*:

> "My beloved! The following divine decree went to those who claim to love Allāh *taʿālā*:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّوْنَ اللهَ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللهُ

In other words, O Muhammad! Say to these people who are claiming love to say: "If you love Allāh, follow me and Allāh will love you."

It becomes clear from here that Allāh's *taʿālā* love is dependent on following and emulating Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Thus, a sign of guidance and an indication of good fortune is emulation of the Sharīʿah, because it is a portrayal of the inner and outer self. The following is most apt:

"O Saʿdī! It is impossible to tread on the straight path as long as you do not follow Hadrat Mustafā *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*."

"The person who does not find the path of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* will wander aimlessly near it but will still not find it."

Demise

He passed away in 289 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān Makkī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAmr, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and his father's name is ʿUthmān Makkī.

Merits

He remained in the company of Sayyid at-Ṭā'ifah Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*, and met Abū ʿAbdillāh Nājī, Abū Khazzāz *rahimahumallāh* and others. He was a shaykh of the Sufis of his time and an imām of this group on the principles of the Ṭarīqah. He narrated Ahādīth from Hadrat Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. "Repentance is compulsory on all sinners irrespective of whether their sins are minor or major. No one has any excuse for not repenting."

Note: This is an excellent word of advice. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us all to practise on it. Āmīn.

2. "Whatever beauty, glitter, splendour, lustre, beauty, light or thoughts come into your heart after pondering and reflecting are all against Allāh *taʿālā*. This is because He is most powerful and all-mighty." (*Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 1)

3. "Knowledge draws a person from the front while fear pulls him back, while the *nafs* becomes lodged in-between the two. It is rebellious,

deceptive and deceiving. You should therefore safeguard yourself against it. Take cognizance of it through the power of knowledge, and prod it forward through the threats of fear. Only then will you achieve your goal." (*Ta<u>s</u>awwuf kā Encyclopaedia*)

<u>Demise</u>

He passed away in 291 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*<u>T</u>abaqāt*)

Hadrat Abū Is-hāq Ibrāhīm ibn Ismāʿīl al-Khawwās *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Is-hāq, and his father's name is Ismāʿīl.

Merits

He was a senior person from among those who trod the path of *tawakkul* (total reliance in Allāh *taʿālā*), and he held a special position among the *mashā'ikh*. He was one of the contemporaries of Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* and Thaurī *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. "The person who genuinely possesses knowledge is the one who follows knowledge, makes use of it, and emulates the Sunnah even though he may possess little knowledge of it."

2. "The person who trades with capital which belongs to someone else is a bankrupt person."

3. "The more a person respects Allāh's *taʿālā* orders, the more Allāh *taʿālā* clothes him with His honour, and places respect for him in the hearts of the believers."

4. "A Sufi is defined as a person whose condition is the same whether he is experiencing constriction and expansion [in sustenance], and remains patient over poverty. His minimum trait

is one of patience and contentment, he remains aloof from affluence, he is used to roughness and harsh situations; when you see him, you find him to be happy over his poverty and dire situation; his daily expenses are weighty on him but he does not mention this difficulty to anyone, he embraces poverty and looks at it with respect, he conceals it to the extent of hiding it from his fellow companions as well, and he considers this poverty to be Allāh's *taʿālā* greatest favour on him."

5. "One of the causes of earning Allāh's *taʿālā* displeasure is when a person expresses scorn for this world while his heart loves it dearly."

6. "It is better for a person to remain in his own old clothes than to wear new clothes which belong to others. A truly destroyed person is one who reaches near his destination and then gets lost."

7. "It is obligatory on a *murīd* to go to such a person who exposes his faults to him, shows him the ways of improvement, and whose attention helps to induce his yearning."

8. "Three things can destroy a *murīd*: (1) love for wealth, (2) love for women, (3) love for leadership. He must repulse love for wealth through abstention, love for women through abstaining from following his desires and eating to his full, and love for wealth by steadfastness in remaining anonymous."

9. “The object of a true *murīd* is Allāh *taʿālā*, the *siddīqīn* are his brothers, solitude is his house, he finds solace in remaining alone, the day causes him grief, the night brings him joy, his heart is his guide, the Qur’ān is his support, crying is his garment, hunger is his gravy, worship is his recreation, *maʿrifat* is his guard, life is his journey, the different times are the stations of his life, piety is his path, patience is his duvet, peace is his mattress, truthfulness is his conveyance, and fear of missing out is his submission.”

10. “The person who drinks from the glass of leadership will be deprived of the sincerity in worship and submission [before Allāh *taʿālā*].”

Demise

He passed away in 291 A.H. in the Jāmiʿ Musjid of Rayy after suffering from a stomach ailment. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 84)

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Nasr Marwazī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad and his father's name is Nasr. He was an erudite *muhaddith* and jurist. Many senior imāms acknowledged his seniority.

Engrossment with knowledge and worship

Together with spreading knowledge, he was an ardent worshipper. He used to perform salāh with much humility and submission. He was performing salāh one day when a bee stung him severely on his forehead to the extent that blood began flowing onto his face. But he did not move in the least.

The minister, Ismāʿīl ibn Ahmad, relates: "I was seated in the court of Samarqand and listening to some cases when Muhammad ibn Nasr entered. I stood up out of respect for him. When he left, my brother, Is-hāq, said to me: "You stood up [out of respect] for one of your subjects!?" When I went to sleep later on, I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream and my brother, Is-hāq, was with him. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* came towards me, held me by my side and said:

ثَبَتَ مُلْكُكَ وَمُلْكُ بَنِيْكَ بِإِجْلَالِكَ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ نَصْرٍ، وَذَهَبَ مُلْكُ أَخِيْكَ بِاسْتِخْفَافِهِ.

https://darulhikmah.blogspot.com

"Your governorship and the governorship of your children will remain in tact by virtue of the respect which you showed to Muhammad ibn Nasr. And your brother's governorship will disappear because of his contempt for Muhammad ibn Nasr."

A *karāmat* of the shaykh

Muhammad ibn Nasr relates an incident about his self: I left Egypt with the intention of going to Makkah, and my slave-woman was also with me. Coincidentally, our boat sunk, and 2 000 pages in which I had recorded Ahādīth were lost. My slave-woman and I managed to reach an island. We could not see any human there, I was overcome by severe thirst, but could not find any water anywhere. I placed my head on my slave-woman's thigh, lied down, and it was as if I was handing myself for death. Suddenly a man appeared, gave me some water which I drank and I gave some to my slave-woman. The man then disappeared. I did not know where he came from and where he went.

Demise

Hadrat Imām Muhammad ibn Nasr passed away in 294 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 181)

Hadrat Abul Hasan Ahmad ibn Muhammad an-Nūrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad and his father's name is Muhammad. He is well-known by the titles of an-Nūrī and Ibn al-Baghawī. His *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan. He remained in the company of Surī Saqatī and Muhammad ibn ʿAlī al-Qassāb.

Acceptance of his *duʿās*

Abul Fadl al-Harawī narrates: Jaʿfar ibn az-Zubayr al-Hāshimī related to me thus: "One day, Abul Hasan an-Nūrī got into the water to take a bath. A thief came, stole his clothes and went away. He was still busy bathing when the thief came back, and placed the clothes before him. The thief's right hand had become paralysed and lifeless. On seeing this, Hadrat Nūrī said: 'O Allāh! He returned my clothes, now You return his hand [to its normal state].' Allāh *taʿālā* returned his hand to its normal state, and the thief departed."

Note: Glory to Allāh! This was a clear *karāmat* of Hadrat Shaykh Nūrī *rahimahullāh*. But the greater *karāmat* was that he felt sorry for the thief, did not exact any revenge from him, did not beat him, did not scold him, nor did he hand him over to the police. Instead, he made *duʿā* for his wellness. This was the character of our elders. We must ponder and think how far away we are from such character. An Arab *ʿālim* wrote a book titled,

How far are we from the character of the pious elders?. It is worth reading this book. By Allāh's grace, it is being translated into Urdu. May Allāh *taʿālā* take it to completion. Āmīn.

Statements

1. "There are two things which are very rare in our times: (1) An *ʿālim* who practises on his knowledge. (2) An *ʿārif* who speaks the facts."

2. "Tasawwuf is neither customs nor sciences. It entails nothing but good character."

3. "The person who does not recognize Allāh *taʿālā* in this world will not recognize Him in the Hereafter as well."

4. "There is an appropriate punishment for each thing. The punishment for an *ʿārif* is when he becomes cut off from the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*."

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When Hadrat Nūrī used to enter the musjid of Shaunīziyyah, the lamps of the musjid would appear dim compared to the lustre on his face. This is why he came to be known as Nūrī (from *nūr* which means light). When he used to be in the company of people, mosquitoes would not bite them.

It was he who had broken the wine vats of Muʿtadid [the caliph], reprimanded him severely and went away to Basra. He only returned to

Baghdad after Muʿtadid passed away. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 75)

Demise

He passed away in 295 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Sayyid at-Tā'ifah Hadrat Abul Qāsim Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Junayd, his father's name is Muhammad, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Qāsim.

Merits

He remained in the company of his maternal uncle, Surī Saqatī, Hārith Muhāsibī and Muhammad ibn 'Alī al-Qassāb. He is from among the imāms and leaders of the Sufis. His speech is well received and quoted by all. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1)

Birth

He was born in 215 A.H.[1]

Impressions of the elders

Abul Qāsim Ka'bī narrates that Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* sent a certain amount of knowledge into this world and showed man the ways of acquiring it. That Pure Being [Allāh *ta'ālā*] gave a considerable share of that knowledge to me."

He was unparalleled in his worship. The minds are confounded and astonished at hearing stories about his worship. He used to remain in solitude for several hours consecutively, acquiring the joy

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[1] Maulānā Wādih Rashīd Nadwī: *Adab Ahl al-Qulūb*, p. 71.

of conversing with Allāh *taʿālā* and seeking His proximity.

Hadrat Khuldī *rahimahullāh* says: "I learnt that Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* used to perform 300 *rakʿats* of optional salāh and 30 000 *tasbīhs* daily while he was in his shop. I personally heard him saying: 'For forty years I did not formally remove my clothes with the intention of lying down.' It was his practice for about twenty years not to eat any food for an entire week at a time. Even in this condition, he would perform 400 *rakʿats* of salāh every night."

Abul Muhsin al-Muhallibī *rahimahullāh* relates: "I asked Hadrat Junayd: 'From where did you obtain this knowledge?' He pointed to a corner of his house and said: 'By presenting myself before Allāh *taʿālā* in this corner for thirty years.'"

Statements

1. He was asked: "What is the path to gaining proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*?" He replied: "(1) To make such *taubah* and have such *taqwā* which puts an end to the intoxication of majesty and greatness, and reduces one to servitude and slavery [before Allāh *taʿālā*]. (2) To have such a yearning which makes you restless to do good deeds. (3) To meditate on Allāh *taʿālā* from the inner recesses of the heart. These are the means to gaining closeness to Allāh *taʿālā*."

2. "*Zuhd* means that your heart must be empty of the thing which your hand is empty."

3. “Fear saves you from an evil destiny. Submission causes you to desire servitude and slavery for Allāh *taʿālā*. Submission and humility means your heart must be soft and your head must be lowered.”

4. “*Yaqīn* refers to firmness in knowledge in which there is no possibility of any alteration.”

5. “Sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*) is a secret between Allāh *taʿālā* and His servant which the angels do not know – so they cannot record it, which Satan does not know – so he cannot sow the seeds of corruption in it, and which the servant’s *nafs* cannot understand – so it cannot become inclined towards it.”

Note: A poet says: “There is such a secret between the lover and his beloved that even the *kirāman kātibīn* do not know about it.”

6. He was asked about *ḥayā’*, so he said:

اَلْحَيَاءُ رُؤْيَةُ التَّقْصِيْرِ وَرُؤْيَةُ الْآلَاءِ تَتَوَلَّدُ مِنْهَا حَالَةٌ تُسَمَّى الْحَيَاءُ

“*Ḥayā’* refers to having sight of one’s shortcomings and Allāh’s *taʿālā* favours. This results in a condition known as *ḥayā’*.”

7. Abū Muḥammad Ḥarīrī *raḥimahullāh* relates: I was at Ḥaḍrat Junayd’s side at the time of his demise. It was a Friday and he was reciting the Qur’ān. I said: ‘O Abul Qāsim! Have mercy on yourself [do not strain yourself so much].’ He

said: ‘O Abū Muhammad! At present, there is no one who is more in need of mercy than myself. Allāh *taʿālā* is folding up the pages of my life at the moment.’”[1]

8. “*Tasawwuf* refers to purity of the heart with Allāh *taʿālā*. And the basis of it is to turn one’s gaze away from the world. Just as Hadrat Hārithah said: ‘When I turned my face away from the world, I got into the habit of remaining awake at night and staying thirsty during the day [i.e. spending the night in worship and fasting during the day].’”

9. “Being unmindful of Allāh *taʿālā* is worse than entry into the Hell-fire.”

10. When you meet a Sufi, do not engage in any academic discussion at the beginning. Instead, meet him in a soft and affectionate way. This is because he will be uncomfortable with academic discussions, while he will be inclined to you when you are soft and affectionate. Once you incline him towards you, he will listen to you and accept whatever academic discussion you have with him.”

11. “If a person claims that Allāh *taʿālā* is his refuge and sanctuary, but gets solace from others apart from Him, then Allāh *taʿālā* will put him

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[1] Maulānā Saʿīd ar-Rahmān Aʿzamī Nadwī: *Tadhkirah Ahl-e-Dil*, p. 13.

through calamities, remove His *dhikr* from his heart, and cause him to make *dhikr* only with his tongue. If the person realizes his folly and returns to Allāh *taʿālā*, He will remove him from those calamities. But if he remains headstrong in his attachment to *ghayrullāh* (others apart from Allāh *taʿālā*), He will remove emotions of mercy towards him from the creation, and replace it with greed. Consequently, people will make demands on him to fulfil their rights while their hearts will be devoid of mercy for him. This will result in his life to be a failure, his death will cause nothing but grief and sorrow, and his Hereafter will be nothing except regret and remorse."

After quoting the above statement, ʿAllāmah Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* says:

نَحْنُ نَعُوْذُ بِاللهِ مِنَ الرُّكُوْنِ إِلَى غَيْرِ اللهِ تَعَالَى

"We seek refuge in Allāh taʿālā from inclining towards anyone apart from Him."

Āmīn yā Arhamar Rāhimīn – let it be so, O the most Merciful of those who show mercy.

12. He was asked about an *ʿārif*, so he said: "The colour of water is according to the utensil in which it is. In other words, an *ʿārif's* actions are in accordance with the needs of the time. (That is, he will choose to do what has the most good, and through which he will earn the most reward)."

13. “The person who desires his *Dīn* to remain safe, and his body and heart to live with peace must not meet with people. This is an era of solitude, and an intelligent person in our times is one who chooses solitude and aloofness from people.”

Note: Just ponder! If this is the condition of the era of Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh*, what can be said about our times!? We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

14. A person came to him, gave him 500 dīnārs, and said: “You must distribute it among your associates.” Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* asked him: “Do you have any wealth apart from this?” He replied: “Yes.” He asked him: “Tell me, are you desirous of more wealth?” He replied: “Yes. I am desirous of it.” Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* said: “Then you must take this money because you are more in need than us.” Saying this, he returned the money to him.

15. “If you see a Sufi who is very smart externally, you must conclude that his internal self is empty.”

Note: Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say this constantly. They would speak out against outward beautification and adornment.

16. “The basis of *tasawwuf* are the following eight qualities of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām.*

1) Generosity. This was a special trait of Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām.*
2) Acceptance of Allāh’s decree – Hadrat Ishāq *ʿalayhis salām.*
3) Patience – Hadrat Ayyūb *ʿalayhis salām.*
4) Indication (abstaining from speech) – Hadrat Zakarīyyā *ʿalayhis salām.*
5) Living as a stranger – Hadrat Yahyā *ʿalayhis salām.*
6) Wearing woollen garments – Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām.*
7) Travelling – Hadrat ʿIsā *ʿalayhis salām*
8) Poverty – Hadrat Sayyidunā Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*

17. “I have not come across anyone who honours this world and experiences comfort from it. The only one who experiences comfort in this world is the one who scorns the world and turns his face away from it.”

18. “When a person opens one door of good intention for himself, Allāh *taʿālā* opens seventy doors of *taufīq* (inspiration, the ability to do good) for him. When a person opens one door of evil intention for himself, Allāh *taʿālā* opens seventy doors of disgrace and humiliation on him without his even realizing it.”

19. “Knowledge has a certain price, so do not give it without obtaining its price.” Someone asked him: “What is its price?” He replied: “Give it to a person who bears it in a good and excellent manner, and does not waste it.”

Note: This shows the great value of knowledge, and the reprehensibility of giving it to those who do not deserve it.

20. Someone asked him: “How is it that your associates and companions are deprived of the wealth which people have?” He replied: “Allāh *taʿālā* does not like wealth for them so that they do not become inclined towards the creation. If they become inclined towards the creation, they will be cut off from Allāh *taʿālā*. So Allāh *taʿālā* deprives them for their own protection. This is why He made Himself their sole purpose and objective. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 82)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at Allāh’s *taʿālā* special grace and bounty – He does not let His special servants to become attracted towards the creation. He wants to make them His own. Some pious personalities taught me this *duʿā* specifically:

اَللّٰهُمَّ كُنْ لَنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا لَكَ

“O Allāh! You become ours, and make us Yours.” Āmīn Yā Rabbal ʿĀlamīn.

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Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *quddisa sirruhu*, has three sections in his great work, *at-Tanbīb at-Tarabī fī Tanzīh Ibn al-ʿArabī*. In the first section, he quotes the statements of the erudite Sufis with regard to the need for and importance of following the Sharīʿah. We are quoting a few statements of Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* from this book.

1. "If you see a person sitting cross legged in the sky, do not bother to even look at him as long as you do not see him adhering strictly to the Qur'ān and Sunnah."

2. "All paths are sealed to the creation except for those who follow in the footsteps of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*."

3. "If I was the ruler, I would chop off the neck of the person who says:

لَا مَوْجُوْدَ إِلَّا اللهُ\لَا فَاعِلَ إِلَّا اللهُ

"There is no existence except Allāh's/There is no doer except Allāh."

Outwardly, this statement is a complete negation of all apart from Allāh *taʿālā* and a destruction of all laws which people are answerable for. (When there is no existence and no doer at all, who will be answerable for the rules and regulations?)

4. Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* was asked about some people who are of the opinion that the laws

of the Sharīʿah do not apply to them. They say that the laws of the Sharīʿah are means to reaching a goal [Allāh *taʿālā*], and since they have reached Him, there is no need for them to follow the laws of the Sharīʿah.

Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* replied: "They are true in their claims of reaching, but they have reached the Hell-fire. A person who steals or commits adultery is better than these people who make such claims. If I were to live for a thousand years, I will not decrease my [optional] devotions in the least without a valid excuse (as for the laws of the Sharīʿah, it is far-fetched to break them even an iota)."

Imām Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* says: "Some *ʿārifīn* are reported to have said that a *sālik* reaches a certain level which causes *taklīf* (legal liability) to be lifted from him. They are not referring to *taklīf Sharʿī* but the *kulfat* (weight, burden) of worship (*ʿibādat*) being lifted from them. In other words, they do not become tired and bored with *ʿibādat*. In fact, there are times when they experience such enjoyment from *ʿibādat* which their *nafs* was finding difficult previously." (*at-Tanbīb at-Tarabī fī Tanzīh Ibn al-ʿArabī*, p. 16)

5. Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* said:

اَلصَّادِقُ يَنْقَلِبُ فِي الْيَوْمِ أَرْبَعِيْنَ مَرَّةً، وَالْمُرَائِيْ يَثْبُتُ عَلَى حَالَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ أَرْبَعِيْنَ سَنَةً. (الفتوحات الربانية، ج١، ص٥٤)

"A sādiq (genuine truthful servant of Allāh taʿālā) feels restless forty times in a day. He searches and is constantly on the look out for avenues of good and where he can get the maximum reward. He will then do what earns him the most reward. As for a hypocrite, he will remain on one condition for forty years without changing in the least. He thinks that if he were to leave out a particular form of dhikr, people will speak about it and say that he left it out. This is known as ostentation which the Ahlullāh safeguard themselves against."

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It is stated in *Nafahātul Uns* that Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* was asked: "Can a person be pardoned without having deeds." He replied: "The deeds are in themselves manifestations of pardon. [i.e. the fact that he has been inspired to do good deeds is a sign that he has been pardoned]." (*Nafahātul Uns,* p. 245)

Demise

He passed away on a Saturday in 297 A.H. His grave is well-known in Baghdad and is visited by all. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*)

Hadrat Mumshād ad-Dīnaurī *rahimahullāh*

Introduction

He held a high position among the Sufis of Iraq, and was unique as regards knowledge and merits. His *karāmāt* were obvious and splendid. His conditions were very lofty and superior. He benefited from the company of Shaykh Yahyā Jalā' *rahimahullāh*, and was from among the contemporaries of Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. "Paradise and whatever is in it is being shown to me for the last forty years. But I did not even turn an eye towards it because it is not my objective. My sole objective is the Being of Allāh *taʿālā* and His pleasure."

2. "Absolute *maʿrifat* refers to having a genuine need for Allāh *taʿālā*."

3. "The path to Allāh *taʿālā* is very far and it is very difficult to walk with Him. But if He holds us by the hand, it becomes very easy for us. In like manner, it is difficult to join Allāh *taʿālā*, to be patient, and to wait for some time. But if He has mercy on us, it becomes extremely easy." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 256)

Note: Hadrat Maulānā Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh,* the head teacher of Dār al-ʿUlūm

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Deoband, says: "This path is not just easy, it is very easy; but very far. There are just two steps, but each step is a hundred thousand stations. If a person is guided [by Allāh *taʿālā*], he will cross it with one jump. As for the one who is not, he will waste his entire life getting caught by just one obstacle or thorn in the path."[1]

4. "Whenever I presented myself before any Sufi, I would empty myself of all my personal inclinations, knowledge and spiritual conditions; and go to him with the hope of deriving spiritual bestowals and blessings from visiting him and speaking to him. This is because if a person goes to a *buzurg* (pious personality) with his own 'treasure', he will be deprived of the blessings of visiting the *buzurg*, sitting in his company and conversing with him."

5. "I met an old man in the course of my travels and journeys. The effects of piety and righteousness were visible on him, so I asked him for some advice. He said: 'You must safeguard your courage (*himmat*) because it is the prelude to everything. If a person's *himmat* is set right and he proves true to it, all his actions and conditions which follow will be correct.'"

6. "The best condition is of the person who totally removes the habit of looking at people from his

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[1] *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*, vol. 4, p. 163 – quoted from *Maktūbāt Yaʿqūbī*.

heart, safeguards his privacy with Allāh *taʿālā* [i.e. fears Him in privacy], and relies on Him in all his affairs."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What beneficial words of advice. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to practise. Āmīn.

Demise

He passed away in 297 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 88)

Hadrat Abū ʿUthmān al-Hiyarī Nīshāpūrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Saʿīd, his father's name is Ismāʿīl, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿUthmān.

He was an imām, *muhaddith*, orator and leader of his time. His title was Shaykh al-Islam. He was originally a resident of Rayy, but settled down in Nīshāpūr and passed away there. He remained in the company of Shāh Kirmānī *rahimahullāh* and Yahyā ibn Muʿādh Rāzī *rahimahullāh*.

He was born in Rayy in 230 A.H.

Merits

Hākim relates: "Our *mashā'ikh* unanimously concur that he was *mustajāb ad-daʿwāt* (one whose *duʿās* were readily accepted), an ardent worshipper, a fountainhead for the ascetics, and one who used to honour and respect the *'ulamā'*." He occupied a distinguished position among the senior *mashā'ikh*. *Tasawwuf* spread through him in Nīshāpūr.

Statements

1. Abū ʿAmr ibn Hamdān narrates that he heard him saying: "The person who appoints the Sunnah as the ruler of his life – i.e. he follows it – will speak words of wisdom."

Note: By virtue of practising on the Sunnah, Allāh *taʿālā* will bestow him with the ability to speak words of wisdom.

"As for the person who is ruled by his desires, he will practice *bidʿah*."

Note: Obviously, when a person follows his desires, the misfortune of this will cause darkness in his heart. This will result in his not doing any good at all. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 14, p. 62)

2. When his condition changed at the time of his death, his son, Abū Bakr, tore his *kurtah*. He opened his eyes and said: "O my son! Acting against the Sunnah externally is a sign of internal ostentation."

The following are some of his beneficial statements on the etiquette of companionship.

1. Abul Ḥasan al-Warrāq narrates that he said: "When you are in the companionship of Allāh *taʿālā*, you must bear in mind good manners, constant trepidation, and meditation."

2. "Be mindful of respect and service (*khidmat*) when in the companionship of the *auliyāʾ*."

3. "Be one of good character when in the companionship of your family."

4. “You must always be pleasant and gracious when in the companionship of your brothers provided they are not committing any sin.”

5. “When in the company of ignorant people, make constant *duʿā* for them and have mercy for them.”

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us all to practise on these words of advice. Āmīn. (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, p. 90)

6. “A person will only reach the level of perfection when four things are equal in his heart: refusal, bestowal, honour, disgrace.”

Note: In other words, he must be fully convinced that all are from Allāh *taʿālā* and he must be pleased with them. There is a Persian saying which translates thus: “It is this level of acceptance of Allāh’s decree which is the highest and loftiest level of *tasawwuf*.”

7. “When I was young, I used to spend my time in the service of Hadrat Abū Hafs Haddād *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat scolded me one day and said: ‘Go away from here. Do not remain with me.’ I walked backwards while my face was towards Hadrat. I continued moving backwards until I disappeared from his sight. In the meantime, I thought to myself that I will dig a hole by Hadrat’s door, enter through it, and leave by his command. When Hadrat realized this condition of

mine, he summoned me close to him and made me into one of his special associates."

Note: Glory to Allāh! This shows the bond which he had with his shaykh from his heart, and his total devotion to him. This is why the shaykh showered his special attention on him and bestowed him with his special proximity.

8. "There are three reasons for enmity: greed for wealth, greed for people's respect, greed for acceptance by people."

9. "Fear will convey you to Allāh *taʿālā*. The pride and arrogance of your *nafs* will cut you off from Allāh *taʿālā*. As for looking down on people, this is an incurable disease."

Note: In other words, it will convey one to destruction. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

10. "As long as you are subservient to your wishes, you will remain a prisoner. But once you hand over all your affairs to Allāh *taʿālā*, you will be a free person, and you will experience peace and comfort."

Note: A poet says: "Those who have been martyred by the dagger of submission and acceptance [of Allāh's decree] are given life and spirit at every moment from Allāh *taʿālā*."

11. "When you go to wealthy people, you must maintain your self-respect. When you go to the

Sufis, you must humble and lower yourself. This is because pride – i.e. self-respect – with wealthy people is actually humility. And humbling and lowering yourself before the Sufis is an act of honour and nobility."

12. "The person who remains in the company of the *auliyā'* will get the inspiration (*taufīq*) of finding the path to Allāh *taʿālā*."

13. "When love becomes genuine, adhering to etiquette for the beloved becomes firm in the lover." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 74)

Demise

He passed away in 298 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abul 'Abbās Ahmad ibn Masrūq *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his father's name is Masrūq, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul 'Abbās.

Merits

He was an imām, ascetic and shaykh of his time. He was from among the seniors of Tūs, and settled down in Baghdad. He remained in the company of 'Allāmah Hārith Muhāsibī *rahimahullāh*, Surī Saqatī *rahimahullāh* and others.

Definition of *tasawwuf*

He defined *tasawwuf* as follows: "To keep yourself separated from unnecessary things, and adhere to things which are absolutely essential."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent definition of *tasawwuf*. It is totally in accordance with the Sharī'ah.

Statements

1. "It is not appropriate for the *sālikīn* to listen to *ghazals* (odes, amatory poems) unless they are composed by people who are internally and externally upright, are of a strong spiritual disposition, and have reached a level of perfection and leadership in knowledge."

2. “If Allāh *taʿālā* becomes the discipliner of a person, there is nothing which can overpower him.”

3. “A believer can only acquire strength through the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*. This is proven from the incident of Hadrat Fātimah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* when she asked Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* for a servant who would help her to prepare the dough. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* instructed her to read *sub-hānallāh, al-hamdulillāh,* and *Allāhu akbar*; and said to her: ‘These words are better for you than a servant.’ As for a hypocrite, he gets strength from food and drink. So there is no power to do good and no strength to abstain from evil except through Allāh, the most high, the Almighty.”

Note: A sincere person undoubtedly gets strength from the *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*, as stated in the Qur’ān:

أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوْبُ

“It is through Allāh’s dhikr that the hearts experience tranquillity.”

4. “Joy and peace acquired from anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā* will be a cause of many anguishes and sorrows.”

Note: We witness this very often in today’s times. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

5. “Respecting the dignity of Muslims really entails respecting the sanctities of Allāh *taʿālā*, and it is through this respect that a person reaches the essence of *taqwā*.”

6. “The tree of *maʿrifat* is irrigated by the water of concern. The tree of repentance is irrigated by the water of remorse. The tree of love is irrigated by the water of unanimity and agreement.”

Demise

He passed away in 299 A.H. or 298 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia*, *Tarjumah Qushayrīyyah*, p. 99)

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Hāmid at-Tirmidhī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Hāmid, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bakr.

He is from among the *mashā'ikh* of Khurāsān, and its enthusiastic and courageous men. He had the honour of meeting Shaykh Ahmad Khadrawīyyah. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 301)

Statements

1. "When a person imbibes internal effulgence (*nūr*), the external body parts respond with good deeds."

2. "A *walī* is always particular about concealing his condition, while the entire creation acknowledges his *wilāyat* (close friendship with Allāh *taʿālā*). On the other hand, a claimant (impostor) goes around announcing his *wilāyat* while people reject it."

3. "Scorning the *auliyā'* is because of a deficiency in *maʿrifat* of Allāh *taʿālā*."

4. "A true *ʿālim* is he who restrains himself at the limits of Allāh *taʿālā*, and he never transgresses them."

5. “Whenever I looked down on a Muslim, I certainly found a deficiency in my *īmān* and *maʿrifat*.”

6. “Your heart and your time are your capital wealth. You have entrapped your heart in various types of [futile] thoughts, and occupied your time in useless conversations. Now tell me, how are you going to make a profit from your capital wealth when you have destroyed it?” (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 86)

Demise

We were not able to establish the year of his death. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abul Husayn ʿAlī ibn Hind al-Qurashī al-Fārsī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAlī, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Husayn, and his father's name is Hind.

Merits

He was one of the senior *mashā'ikh* and *ʿulamā'* of Persia. He remained in the company of Jaʿfar Haddād, ʿUmrah ibn ʿUthmān al-Malakī and others. He was a man of lofty conditions and pure ranks.

Statements

1. "Seek comfort by remaining with Allāh *taʿālā* and do not seek comfort by separating yourself from Him. The one who seeks comfort by remaining with Allāh *taʿālā* will find salvation. The one who seeks comfort by separating himself from Allāh *taʿālā* has fallen into destruction. Seeking comfort with Allāh *taʿālā* involves experiencing comfort from His *dhikr*. Seeking comfort by separating oneself from Allāh *taʿālā* means total neglect with regard to Allāh's *dhikr*. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*."

2. "When Allāh *taʿālā* honours a person by virtue of enabling him to respect and honour the pious elders, He instils the person's respect in the hearts of people. When He deprives a person of this, He removes people's respect for him from

their hearts. This is why we find such people (who do not have any respect for the elders) to be abhorred by people even if they may have good character and a righteous lifestyle. The reason for this is that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: 'Showing respect and honour to Allāh *taʿālā* entails showing respect to elderly Muslims.'" (*Tabaqāt*, p. 97)

Note: In other words, a person who does not show respect to an old Muslim is as if he did not show respect for Allāh's might. Why, then, should such a person not be disgraced and humiliated among the creation? We should therefore respect and honour all our elders. We must make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* to inspire us to show as much respect as possible to all our elders, and to save us from disgrace and humiliation.

3. "The heart is a utensil and every utensil has something which is placed in it. The hearts of the *auliyā'* are utensils for *maʿrifat*, the hearts of the *ʿārifīn* are utensils for *mahabbat* (love), the hearts of the *muhibbīn* (lovers) are utensils for *shauq* (enthusiasm), the hearts of the *mushtāqīn* (enthusiastic people) are utensils for affinity. There are certain etiquette for these conditions. The one who does not consider these etiquette will be destroyed."

4. "The one who opts for the Qur'ān will always protect the truth. The one who opts for the Qur'ān will not have his *Dīnī* and worldly matters concealed from him. Instead, he will pass his time

with knowledge and perception, not with heedlessness." (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 10, p. 388)

Demise

We were not able to establish the year of his death. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-Khāliq ad-Dīnaurī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and his father's name is ʿAbd al-Khāliq.

Merits

He was from among the senior *mashā'ikh*, and *buzurgs* (pious personalities) of lofty conditions and immense courage. He was an erudite scholar and very eloquent in expression. After living for some time in Wādī Qurā, he settled down in Dīnaur.

Statements

1. "When juniors seek the companionship of seniors, it is a sign of inspiration and intelligence. When seniors are desirous of the companionship of juniors, it is a sign of wretchedness and stupidity."

2. "The loftiest branch of knowledge is knowledge of the *Asmā' Husnā* (the beautiful names of Allāh *taʿālā*) and the attributes of Allāh *taʿālā*. In like manner, knowledge of sincerity and rectification of the inner self is extremely important from among the outward actions." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 108)

Note: *Māshā Allāh*, he explained the gist of *Dīn*, the Tarīqah, rectification and tutoring in a

manner which ensures a person's salvation provided he practises on it. When he speaks of juniors, I think he is referring to youngsters whose facial hair has not appeared as yet. It is not permissible to desire their companionship unnecessarily. Yes, if a person turns his attention to them with the noble intention of reforming and rectifying them, then it is a laudable objective. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

We were not able to establish the year of his death. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh as-Sajzī *rahimahullāh*

Merits

He was from among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Khurāsān. He remained in the company of Hadrat Abū Hafs Haddād *rahimahullāh*. He traversed jungles on several occasions – placing his trust solely in Allāh *taʿālā*. Someone asked him on one occasion: "Why do you not wear course clothing like the Sufis?" He replied: "It is a sign of hypocrisy to dress like such courageous people while not emulating them." He was asked: "What do you mean by courage?" He replied: "To consider people to be excused for whatever they do, but to consider yourself liable for whatever you do. To be affectionate to the entire creation irrespective of whether they desire your well-being or not." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 287)

Statements

1. "The person who does not purify his actions has not purified his body. The one who does not purify his body has not purified his heart. The one who does not purify his heart has not purified his intention. And an intention is the basis for all things."

2. "There are three signs of the *auliyā'* of Allāh *taʿālā*: (1) To be humble despite having a lofty rank. (2) To opt for an abstentious life despite having the means. (3) To be just despite having the power."

3. “Do not point fingers at another unless you are fully convinced that your own sins have been pardoned.”

Note: No one knows whether his sins have been pardoned or not. Thus, there is no room whatsoever to find faults with others. We should remain fearful because we do not know how we will fare on the day of Resurrection.

4. “The following are the most beneficial actions for becoming a *murīd*: remaining in the company of the righteous; emulating their actions, character and mannerisms; visiting the graves of the *auliyā’*; and to be ever-ready to serve one’s friends and companions.” (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 86)

Shaykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* said: “The Tarīqah entails nothing but service to the creation (*khidmat-e-khalq*). Nothing can be achieved by just having a *tasbīh* (rosary), *musallā* (prayer mat) and course and worn-out clothing.” (*Gulistān*)

Demise

We were not able to establish the year of his death. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Muhammad ibn ʿAlī al-Maʿrūf Muhammad ʿUlyān Nasawī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is ʿUlyān. He is from among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Nasā, and one of the companions of Abū ʿUthmān Hiyarī regarding whom it is said that he is the imām of the *ahl-e-maʿārif* (those who have truly recognized Allāh *taʿālā*).

Statements

1. "Abstention from this world is the key to desire for the Hereafter."

2. "One of the signs of the *auliyā'* is that they are happy with the decrees [of Allāh *taʿālā*] which people are generally displeased with."

3. "The generosity of a generous person is only genuine when he considers his gift to be insignificant, and has full conviction in the greatness and superiority of the person to whom he gave it."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent sign of generosity. We ought to bear this in mind. In fact, we should gauge ourselves against this criterion.

4. "The person who worships Allāh *taʿālā* out of hope for reward or fear from punishment has actually displayed his despicability and his greed.

What a bad thing it is for a slave to serve his Master for *Dīnī* and worldly motives!"

Note: A poet rightly said: "Do not show servitude on the condition of a wage because the Master is fully aware of providing for His slave."

This is the highest level of sincerity. Doing a deed out of hope for reward and fear of punishment does not negate sincerity.

5. "A person who displays his *karāmat* (supernatural feat) is a claimant, while the one whose *karāmat* is displayed by Allāh *taʿālā* is a *walī*." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 100)

6. Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Farrā' says: I heard Muhammad ibn ʿUlyān saying: "Abstention from this world is the key to desire for the Hereafter."

7. "Self-respect safeguards a person's *Dīn* and *nafs*, protects the sanctity of the believers, and causes one to consider one's actions to be insignificant." (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 4, p. 405)

Demise

We were not able to establish the year of his death. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū Muzaffar al-Qarmīsīnī *rahimahullāh*

Merits

He was one of the senior *mashā'ikh* of Jabal and one of its high-ranking fakirs and *sādiqīn* (truthful ones). He remained in the company of Hadrat 'Abdullāh al-Kharrāz and other *mashā'ikh* above him. He held a distinguished position in his Tarīqah.

Statements

1. "There are three types of fasts: (1) Fasting of the soul. This is done by reducing one's hopes. (2) Fasting of the intellect. This is done by acting against one's desires. (3) Fasting of the *nafs*. This is done by abstaining from food, drink and conjugal relations."

2. "The person who accommodates the company of young boys and youth whose facial hair has not appeared as yet will become a cause of affliction even if the accommodates their company after fulfilling all the conditions of safety and well-being. What, then, can be said if their companionship is accommodated without fulfilling the required prerequisites!?"

Note: Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* used to strictly emphasize abstention in this regard. He used to consider it to be from among the obstacles in the

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Tarīqah. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from this major affliction.

3. "A Sufi who accommodates the leniency and softness of women is a most despicable Sufi. I say this because Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اَلرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ

"Men are overseers of women."

When a man accepts a woman's authority over him, he will never be successful.

4. "The best sustenance is the one which Allāh *taʿālā* sends to you in a *halāl* way without your having sought it or strove for it."

5. "A person who practises on the etiquette of the Sharīʿah will find his followers also being disciplined on those etiquette. If a person is lazy in this regard, he will be destroyed himself, and will destroy others as well. If a person does not learn any etiquette from a *murshid* (spiritual guide), no *murīd* will learn any etiquette from him, and be embellished by his ways." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 97)

Note: This shows the importance of learning etiquette under a qualified *murshid*. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* explains this in the following couplet: "You will not be able to walk alone in the path of love. I am walking this path, come walk with me."

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Demise

We were not able to establish the year of his death. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Muhammad and Ahmad, the two sons of Abul Wird *rahimahullāh*

Merits

They both had the opportunity of meeting Hadrat Surī Saqatī, Hadrat Abūl Fath and Hadrat Hārith Muhāsibī *rahimahumullāh*. They were strict adherents of the way of Hadrat Bishr Hāfī *rahimahullāh*. They were very pious and righteous people. They were from among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Iraq, and were close associates of Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. "When heedlessness is raised, submission (before Allāh *ta'ālā*) is raised." I say: The raising of heedlessness refers to the removal of heedlessness, and the raising of submission refers to the loftiness of submission. And Allāh knows best.

Note: *Māshā Allāh*, what an excellent explanation. If not, it would have been difficult to understand. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him.

2. "A *walī* of Allāh *ta'ālā* is the one who loves Allāh's friends and dislikes Allāh's enemies."

3. "One of the etiquette of a Sufi is that he must not reprimand and scorn a materialist. Instead, he should make *du'ā* for him and ask Allāh *ta'ālā* to save him from the toiling and striving which is essential when seeking this world."

4. “The destruction of people lies in two things: (1) Becoming occupied with optional acts (*nawāfil*) while neglecting the compulsory duties (*farā’id*). (2) When the limbs carry out actions without conformity with the heart.”

5. “People are deprived of reaching Allāh *taʿālā* when they break the principles.”

6. “When a *walī* progresses in three things, he increases in three more things. (1) When his character improves, his humility and submission increases. (2) When his wealth increases, his generosity increases. (3) The older he gets, the more his striving and spiritual exercises progress.” (*Tabaqāt*, pp. 85, 85)

Demise

We were not able to establish the year of his death. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū Bakr Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Saʿdān *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bakr, and his father's name is Muhammad ibn Saʿdān.

Merits

His was a resident of Baghdad. He remained in the company of Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Nūrī *rahimahullāh*. He was a contemporary of Shaykh Raudbārī *rahimahullāh*. He was one of the most senior *mashā'ikh* of his time. Shaykh Abul Hasan Siddīq *rahimahullāh* and Shaykh Abul Hasan Furghānī *rahimahullāh* spoke highly of him. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 396)

Statements

1. "A person who enters heedlessly into a debate will necessarily suffer from three faults: (1) He will fight, shout and scream. And this is prohibited. (2) He will desire the upper hand to the detriment of others. This is also prohibited. (3) He will be malicious and become angry. This is also prohibited. As for the person who enters a debate with the proper intention, his opening speech will be an admonition, middle speech will be a proof, and his concluding speech will attract [Allāh's] blessings."

Note: This shows the reprehensibility of debating. One should abstain from it as far as possible. But there are times when a debate becomes essential for the sake of establishing the truth and defeating falsehood, and to remove followers of the group which is in the right from doubts and misgivings, and convey them to conviction and assurance.

Demise

We were not able to establish the year of his death. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Imām Nasa'ī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his father's name is Shuʿayb, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān.

Birth

He was born in 215 A.H. He himself says:

يشبه أن يكون مولدي في سنة ٢١٥ه

"I estimate that I was born in 215 A.H."

Hadīth

The era in which Imām Nasa'ī *rahimahullāh* was born was marked by leaving one's home and travelling to distant lands and places for the sake of Hadīth. This had become a hallmark of the Muslims and is difficult to estimate today. After studying the lives of the *muhaddithīn*, it becomes clear that travelling to different countries, walking on foot for thousands of miles, crossing continents and oceans were all minor things for the *'ulamā'* of those days.

Teachers

He has a very wide circle of teachers. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* says:

سمع من خلائق لا يحصون

"He learnt from a large group of people. It is difficult to enumerate them."

Is-hāq ibn Rāhwayh, Muhammad ibn Nasr and ʿAlī ibn Hajar are from among his teachers.

Abstinence and piety

He was unique in his abstinence and piety. He used to adhere to the fasting of Hadrat Dāʾūd *ʿalayhis salām*, i.e. fasting one day and not fasting the next. He used to spend a major portion of his day and night in worship. He performed hajj on many occasions and had an enthusiasm for jihād. He joined the *amīr* of Egypt for jihād on one occasion. People acknowledged his bravery and valour. He established the Sunnats of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* conveyed him to such a lofty status.

A time of tribulation

Imām Nasaʾī *rahimahullāh* enjoyed a certain level of popularity, respect and acceptance in Egypt. Some people were jealous of this so he left Egypt in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 302 A.H. and proceeded to Ramlah in Palestine. The Banū Umayyah had been ruling over Shām for a lengthy period, and this gave the Khārijīyyah and Nāsibīyyah (two deviant sects) an opportunity to gain considerable control. The masses harboured ill-feelings towards Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Imām Nasaʾī *rahimahullāh* therefore went to the Jāmiʿ Musjid of Damascus, climbed the pulpit, and

began reading from *Kitāb Khasā'is ʿAlī radiyallāhu ʿanhu* – the special qualities and merits of Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He had just started reading it when a person posed this question to him: "Have you also written a book on the merits of Muʿāwiyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*?" He replied: "It is sufficient for us not to talk about him at all." This provoked the masses against him, they accused him of belonging to the Shīʿah sect, and they began assaulting him. He was severely injured in some soft spots of his body and was on the verge of dying. Some people carried him to his house. He said to them: "Take me to Makkah Mukarramah so that I may die there." He eventually went to Allāh *taʿālā* in this condition. To Allāh *taʿālā* we belong and to Him is our return.

Demise

He passed away in Makkah Mukarramah in 303 A.H. on a Monday. He was buried between Safā and Marwah. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Muhaddithīn-e-ʿIzām*, p. 206)

Hadrat Abū Muhammad Ruwaym ibn Ahmad *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ruwaym, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad, and his father's name is Ahmad.

Merits

He was an imām of his time, a *qārī*, a jurist and an ascetic. He was born in Baghdad, was from among its senior *mashā'ikh*, and an erudite *ʿālim*. He used to say that he was a student and *murīd* of Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*, and was from among his companions and associates.

Shaykh Abū ʿAbdillāh Khafīf says: "I have not come across anyone who could speak on the topic of *tauhīd* as effectively as Shaykh Ruwaym."

Statements

1. The following statement is quoted in *Futūhāt Makkīyyah*: "Allāh *taʿālā* removes the lustre of *īmān* from the heart of the person who sits among the Sufis and opposes them in matters which they have already investigated and researched."

2. He was asked about this, so he said: "You must be terrified of all apart from Allāh *taʿālā* to the extent that you are terrified by your own *nafs*." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 262)

3. “Patience means putting an end to all complaints, and accepting calamities happily.” (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 14, p. 234)

4. “Wisdom demands you to choose flexibility and ease in the laws for your fellow brothers, while you yourself impose the more difficult option on yourself. Flexibility for your fellow brothers involves following the requirements of knowledge, while bearing difficulty on yourself is the demand of piety and asceticism.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent word of advice.

5. He was asked about love, so he said: “It involves agreement with the beloved in every situation.” He then quoted this poem:

وَلَوْ قِيْلَ مُتْ قُلْتُ سَمْعًا وَطَاعَةً – وَقُلْتُ لِدَاعِى الْمَوْتِ أَهْلًا وَمَرْحَبًا

“If I was told: ‘Die!’ I would say: ‘I hear and obey.’ And I will say to the caller of death: ‘Welcome.’”

6. He was asked: “How are you?” He replied: “Why are you asking about the condition of a person whose religion is to follow the desires of his self, and whose courage is wretchedness? He is neither a righteous person of piety, nor is he clean and tidy.” (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 75)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his humility and submission. This is the condition of anyone who gains *maʿrifat* of his self.

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Demise

He passed away in 303 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Mahfūz ibn Mahmūd Nīshāpūrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Mahfūz and his father's name is Mahmūd.

Merits

He is listed in the second level of *mashā'ikh*, while some scholars list him in the third level. He is from among the early *mashā'ikh* of Nīshāpūr, and is one of the *murīds* of Shaykh Abū Hafs *rahimahullāh*. He then went on to remaining in the company of Shaykh 'Uthmān Hiyarī *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. "*Tawakkul* (reliance on Allāh *ta'ālā*) means that a person eats without any greed and extreme desire."

2. "The person who looks at the merits of his self will get caught up in looking at the evils of others. The person who looks at his own faults will be saved from looking at the evils of others."

3. "The best person is the one whose heart is most saved from looking at the faults of Muslims." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 320)

4. "A genuinely repentant person is one who repents from his acts of obedience, let alone his

acts of heedlessness." (In other words, he has to repent more from them).

5. "Do not judge people on the scale of your *nafs* or else you will be destroyed. Instead, you must judge them with the purpose of learning your bankruptcy [faults] and their merits."

6. "The person who thinks that a certain Muslim is *maftūn* (tempted into sin) must conclude that he himself is *maftūn*."

Demise

He passed away in 303 A.H. or 304 A.H. in Khurāsān. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 86)

Hadrat Ahmad ibn 'Imrān ibn Surayj *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Ahmad, his father's name is 'Imrān ibn Surayj al-Baghdādī, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul 'Abbās, and his title is Shaykh al-Islam. He is a jurist of Iraq and an author of many books. He was born some time after 240 A.H.

Merits

He learnt Ahādīth when he was a youth and met the students of Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah *rahimahullāh*. He studied *fiqh* under Abul Qāsim 'Uthmān ibn Bashār Anmātī Shāfi'ī, and the Shāfi'ī *madh-hab* spread through him. He is an author of 400 books. He remained in the company of Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. Abū 'Alī ibn Khayrān says that I heard Abul 'Abbās ibn Surayj saying: "I saw a dream in which red gold was showering upon me, and my lap and sleeves were filled with it. An interpretation of this dream was given to me thus: I will be given such knowledge which will be valuable and rare like red gold."

2. Hassān ibn Muhammad relates: "We attended an assembly of Ibn Surayj in 303 A.H. A learned shaykh got up and said: 'O judge! Glad tidings to

you. Allāh *taʿālā* certainly sends a *mujaddid* (one who revives *Dīn*) at the end of each century. He sent Muhammad ibn Idrīs Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* after 200 years, and sent you after 300 years.' On hearing this, Abul ʿAbbās screamed and began crying. He passed away in that same year."

Note: He disliked praises being showered on him to such an extent that he departed from this world.

Demise

He passed away in 303 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14, p. 201)

Hadrat Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf ibn al-Husayn ar-Rāzī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Yūsuf, his father's name is Husayn, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Yaʿqūb.

Merits

He was one of the *shuyūkh* of Rayy, and it was his habit to abstain from positions of authority and formalities, and to remain sincere. He was an *ʿālim* and *adīb* (litterateur) of his time. He remained in the company of Hadrat Dhun Nūn Misrī and Abū Turāb Nakhbashī. He accompanied Shaykh Abū Saʿīd Khazzāz on his journeys. He loved to see himself as a non-entity and loved people to consider him as such. In other words, he did not like people to consider him to be a man of high position.

Statements

1. "Pure *tauhīd* means a person must think he is standing before Allāh *taʿālā*, and He is promulgating His laws on him."

2. "The one who is most desirous of this world is the one who speaks out against the world in the presence of worldly people because it is a good way of earning of the world. What an evil occupation this is because he is teaching people to be abstentious while he himself is desirous of the world in that very same assembly."

3. “I pondered over the things which bring about the downfall of the Sufis, and concluded that they are two: (1) interaction with outsiders, (2) inclination towards women.”

4. “There is transgression with regard to this world and in respect of knowledge. The one who wants to be saved from the transgression of knowledge must engage in worship. The one who wants to be saved from the transgression of the world must live a life of abstention.”

Note: Muslihul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to quote the following Hadīth from *Majmaʿul Bihār*:

إن للعلم طغيانا كما للمال (مجمع البحار)

“There is a transgression for knowledge just as there is for wealth.”

He used to say that there is transgression in worship as well – it causes a person to be proud and arrogant. He used to say that to gain salvation from these two [transgression of knowledge and wealth], a person must consider them to be gifts from Allāh *taʿālā*, and not the fruits of one’s efforts.

5. “When you see a *murīd* practising on concessions (*rukhsah*) [of the Sharīʿah] and occupied in acquiring useless knowledge, you must conclude that no good can be expected from him.”

6. “You will get an understanding of knowledge through respect, correction of deeds through knowledge, and wisdom through practising. Through wisdom, you will consider abstention to be a boon, and you will be given the inspiration to be abstentious. Once you are abstentious, you will cast aside this world. When you cast aside the world, you will desire the Hereafter. When you have desire for the Hereafter, you will be blessed with Allāh’s pleasure.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the progressive prescription which he gave for the acquisition of good qualities. This was really the salient feature of these personalities of *maʿrifat*.

7. A Hadīth states that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to Bilāl *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

أَرِحْنَا بِهَا يَا بِلَالُ

“O Bilāl! Give us comfort through salāh.”

This means: O Bilāl! Remove us from preoccupation with this world and give us comfort through salāh. This is because salāh was the coolness of the eyes of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

8. “When you want to differentiate between an intelligent person and a foolish one, then speak about an impossibility to him. If he accepts it, you must conclude that he is foolish.” (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 77)

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Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent differentiation.

9. "All good is stored in one house, and humility is the key to it."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent fact he apprised us of. May Allāh *taʿālā* – through His grace – keep us under His protection from pride and arrogance, and bestow us with humility.

10. "When I was departing from Shaykh Dhun Nūn Misrī, I asked him for advice. He said: 'You must bear the pain and anguish which you experience from people. As far as possible, do not let your heart to be unmindful of Allāh *taʿālā*. Respect Allāh's orders so that He may bestow you with respect.'"

Demise

He passed away in 304 A.H. He said at the time of his death: "O Allāh! I made an effort to bring people towards You. As far as I could, I showed every evil of mine to them. O Allāh! Pardon me for each one of them."

After he passed away, some people saw him in a dream and asked him how he fared. He replied: "Allāh *taʿālā* said to me: 'Repeat the *duʿā* which you had made.' I repeated it, and Allāh *taʿālā* said: 'I have pardoned you.'" (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 362)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Ahmad ibn Yahyā ibn Jallā' *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his father's name is Yahyā, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh.

Merits

He was from the second level of Sufis. He was born and brought up in Baghdad, and settled down in Damascus. This is why he is known as Dimishqī. He is listed among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Sufis. He remained in the company of Hadrat Ayān *rahimahullāh*, Dhun Nūn Misrī *rahimahullāh* and Abū ʿUbaydah Asrī *rahimahullāh*. He was an erudite *ʿālim* and a teacher of Muhammad Dā'ūd ar-Rafī *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. He was asked:

متى يستحق للفقراء اسم الفقير

"When do the fakirs become eligible to be called fakirs?"

He replied: "When there remains no external and internal demand from their *nafs*." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 283)

2. He related: "I asked my parents to give me over to Allāh *taʿālā*. They both gladly said: 'We have given you over to Allāh *taʿālā*.' I then left home, journeyed for some time, and returned home. It was night time when I returned and it was pouring heavily. On reaching my house, I knocked on the door. A voice from inside called out: 'Who is there?' I replied: 'It is your son.' The voice said: 'We had just one son whom we handed over to Allāh *taʿālā*. We are Arabs and we do not take back something which we gave.' The door was not opened for me, and I went away."

3. "I was in Dhul Hulayfah with the intention of proceeding for hajj. People were still tying their *ihrāms* when I saw a youngster taking a bath for *ihrām*. When he finished bathing, I heard him saying: 'O Allāh! I want to say: '*Labbayk Allāhumma Labbayk'* (here I am at Your service O Allāh, here I am), but I fear that You will reply: *'Lā labbayk wa lā saʿdayk'* (your *labbayk* is not accepted, and your aid is rejected).' He was saying this again and again. When it got quite late, I said to him: 'You will have to enter into *ihrām*, so say whatever you have to.' But he expressed the same concern to me as well. I said: 'You must have good expectations from Allāh *taʿālā*, and join me in saying *Labbayk Allāhumma Labbayk*.' He said: *'Labbayk Allāhumma'*. He said the word *Allāhumma* by dragging on it, and his soul left his body." (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 190)

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Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his lofty condition. What fear he must have had that he did not consider himself worthy of saying the *Labbayk*.

4. "The person who considers praise and criticism to be equal [i.e. he accepts both equally] is an ascetic. The person who carries out the *farā'id* (compulsory duties) in the beginning time when they are to be fulfilled is an *ʿābid* (an ardent worshipper). The one who considers everything to be from Allāh *taʿālā* is a *muwahhid* (one who truly believes in the oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*)."

5. "The person whose courage is beyond the existing creations will reach his Creator. When a person attaches his *nafs* to someone other than Allāh *taʿālā*, He separates Himself from him because He is far more superior than to tolerate any partner with Himself."

6. "If a person commits a sin in front of me, and then a barrier comes between him and myself, it does not behove me to believe that he did not repent over that sin. It is possible that he repented during this short time. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 75)

Demise

He passed away in 306 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 190)

Hadrat Abul ʿAbbās Ahmad ibn Sahl al-Ādamī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul ʿAbbās, his father's name is Ahmad ibn Sahl ibn ʿAtā.

Merits

He is from among the senior *mashā'ikh* and *ʿulamā'* of the Sufis. He remained in the company of Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*, Ibrāhīm al-Māzistānī *rahimahullāh* and numerous other *mashā'ikh*.

Statements

1. "The person who is disciplined by the etiquette of the righteous becomes eligible for a carpet of *karāmat*. The person who is disciplined by the etiquette of the *auliyā'* becomes eligible for a carpet of proximity [to Allāh *taʿālā*]. The one who is disciplined by the etiquette of the *siddīqīn* becomes eligible for a carpet of *mushāhadah* [witnessing the grandeur of Allāh *taʿālā*]. The one who is disciplined by the etiquette of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* becomes eligible for the carpet of intimacy and delight [with Allāh *taʿālā*]."

2. "When Hadrat Ādam *ʿalayhis salām* disobeyed Allāh *taʿālā*, everything in Paradise cried over him except for gold and silver. Allāh *taʿālā* asked them: 'Why did you not cry over Ādam?' They replied: 'We cannot cry over someone who

disobeys You.' Allāh *taʿālā* said: 'I take an oath by My might and honour, everything will be valued through you, and I will make mankind your slaves.'"

3. "Obtaining tranquillity from your natural likes will prevent you from reaching high levels of recognition."

Note: Even if one's likes are permissible, occupying one's self too much with them will prevent one from reaching the high levels. ʿAllāmah Ibn Qayyim *rahimahullāh* says:

قال لي يوما شيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية قدس الله سره في شيء من المباح هذا ينافي في المراتب العلية وإن لم يكن تركه شرطا في النجاة. (مدارج السالكين، ج١، ص٢٦)

"Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymīyyah rahimahullāh once said to me with regard to using things which are permissible (mubāh): 'Using this thing prevents one from reaching high levels, even if not using it is not a prerequisite for salvation.'"

4. "Keep your heart in the company of those who engage in Allāh's *dhikr*. In doing this, there is hope for heedlessness to be removed from your heart. Beware of being in their company but not joining them in Allāh's *dhikr*, or else you will be punished."

5. He used to say with regard to this verse:

ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَتُوْبُوْا

"Allāh then relented to them so that they may turn in repentance [to Him]."

"As long as Allāh *taʿālā* does not turn towards a person with mercy, he does not turn to Allāh *taʿālā* in obedience."

6. He used to say with regard to this verse:

هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَا يَبْلَى

"[Satan said]: Should I show you the tree of eternity and kingdom which does not come to an end?"

Hadrat Ādam *ʿalayhis salām* said to Allāh *taʿālā*: "O my Allāh! Why did You punish me whereas I ate of the tree solely for the purpose of remaining in Your proximity forever?" Allāh *taʿālā* replied: "O Ādam! You desired eternity from the tree and not from Me, whereas eternity is in My control and belongs to Me. You thus committed *shirk* without knowing it. Nevertheless, I am reprimanding you by removing you from Paradise so that you do not forget Me at any time."

7. "Allāh *taʿālā* says: 'O man! When I give you the world, you become so engrossed in it that you turn your face away from Me. When I do not give it to you, you become occupied in its quest and become unmindful of me. Now you tell Me: When will you have time for Me?'"

8. “The person who finds it difficult to obey Allāh *taʿālā* will not be able to gain proximity to Him. The person who did not get the bounty of Allāh’s *dhikr* in this world will be deprived of the bounty of seeing Him in the Hereafter.”

9. “A person gets awe [from people] through piety. The person whose piety is less will have less awe.”

10. “When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* departed from this world, Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* ruled over the people with a twig by virtue of the strength of the fragrance of prophet-hood. When he departed from this world, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* proceeded to rectify and discipline the people, and he established Allāh’s laws with a whip. Hadrat ʿUthmān *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* could not rule by the whip. This is why his government could not be as strong as the previous two. When he was martyred, Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* could not control the people without a sword. He considered the sword to be most effective and used it.”

11. “A person does not reach high ranks through excessive salāh, fasting, charity and other forms of striving. Rather, he reaches them through excellent character.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! This proves the merit and virtue of good character.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "The person with the best character will be closest to me on the day of Resurrection."

12. "The doe-eyed damsels (*hūrīs*) consider turning away from this world to be the best dowry of Paradise. And Allāh *taʿālā* considers turning away from one's *nafs* to be the most beloved way of reaching Him."

13. "The silence of an *ʿārif* is *tasbīh* (glorification of Allāh *taʿālā*), his speech is *taqdīs* (extolling the sanctity of Allāh *taʿālā*), his sleep is a *dhikr*, and his waking up is salāh. This is because every breath of his comes out while visualizing Allāh *taʿālā*."

14. "The entire Qur'ān contains just two things: (1) showing due consideration to the etiquette of servitude [before Allāh *taʿālā*], (2) respecting the right of Allāh's divinity." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 82)

Demise

He passed away in 309 A.H. or 311 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū Muhammad ʿAbdullāh ibn Muhammad Khazzār *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad, and his father's name is Muhammad Khazzār.

Merits

He is listed among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Rayy. For many years he lived near the Haram. He is from among those righteous people who remained steadfast on the truth, and continued acquiring sustenance in *halāl* and lawful ways. He remained in the company of Abū ʿImrān Kabīr. He also met the companions of Abū Hafs Nīshāpūrī and Abū Yazīd. They all used to honour and revere him.

Abū Hafs *rahimahullāh* is reported to have said about him: "There is a very capable young man in Rayy. If he remains on the correct path and correct mannerisms, he will become one of Allāh's *taʿālā* special servants."

Statements

1. "Hunger is the sustenance of the ascetics, and *dhikr* is the sustenance of the *ʿārifīn*."

2. "To worship Allāh *taʿālā* in public and to maintain one's internal self free from obedience to

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others [apart from Allāh *taʿālā*] is one of the characteristics of righteous people."

Demise

He passed away before 310 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 89)

Hadrat Abū Muhammad Ahmad ibn Muhammad Jarīrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ahmad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad, and his father's name is Muhammad ibn Husayn.

Merits

He was one of the senior companions of Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh*. He also remained in the company of Hadrat Sahl ibn ʿAbdillāh Tusturī *rahimahullāh*. When Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* passed away, he was appointed as his deputy. He was well-versed in the sciences of the Sufis. He was a very senior *buzurg* and was known as Shaykh as-Sufiyā' (the shaykh of the Sufis). (*Tasawwuf kā Encyclopaedia, Tarjumah Risālah Qushayrīyyah*)

Statements

1. "If a person's *nafs* overcomes him, he becomes a prisoner to the orders of his desires, and becomes imprisoned in the prison of greed and desires. Allāh *taʿālā* makes all benefits *harām* to his heart. Consequently, he will not enjoy the beauty and sweetness of Allāh's speech [the Qur'ān] even if he were to complete the recitation of one whole Qur'ān a day. This is because Allāh *taʿālā* says:

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ اٰيٰتِيَ الَّذِيْنَ يَتَكَبَّرُوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ

"I will turn away from My signs those who are unjustly proud in the earth." (Sūrah al-Aʿrāf, 7: 146)

I will prevent them from understanding My verses and from taking pleasure from them because they vexed pride because of their *nafs*, appearance and conditions of this world.

This is why Allāh *taʿālā* turned them away from understanding His directives and verses, and sealed the path of understanding His Book. He took away from them the ability to benefit from His admonishments, and placed them in the prison of their intellects and own opinions. So they neither know the true path nor do they want to know it. Instead, they reject those who are on the truth, distort His speech, and explain it in a manner which was not intended. They forget that Allāh *taʿālā* had given them knowledge solely to humble themselves and, after considering Allāh's *taʿālā* greatness and grandeur, to become humble and submissive before His servants.

Note: This heart-rending statement of Hadrat must be read with deep reflection, and is worthy of taking admonition from it.

2. "If I see a person leaving me for Allāh's sake, I will lay down my eyes for him."

Note: This is because he followed the instruction of *bughd lillāh* (dislike for Allāh's sake) which ought to be valued. Nowadays, there is none who has *bughd lillāh* nor anyone who values this

quality. In fact, we become angry with a person over a trivial disapproval on his part.

3. "The person who reads the Qur'ān with the intention of obtaining high levels in Paradise is actually becoming pleased with a little in place of a lot. This is because Paradise is a creation, while the Qur'ān is not a creation. A very great benefit of reading the Qur'ān is finding Allāh *taʿālā* and understanding His directives. The person who seeks the world from reading the Qur'ān has very low courage. The person who does this loses all the good which can be acquired from the Qur'ān."

4. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يَالَيْتَنِيْ مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسْيًا مَّنْسِيًّا

"If only I died before this, and became completely forgotten."

He used to say with regard to the above verse: "Maryam *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* said this because Allāh *taʿālā* informed her that there will soon come a time when Allāh will be left aside and Hadrat ʿĪsā *ʿalayhis salām* will be worshipped. She was grieved by this and said: 'I wish I died before this and did not bear in my womb a person who would be worshipped by leaving Allāh *taʿālā* aside.' Allāh *taʿālā* then enabled ʿĪsā *ʿalayhis salām* to speak and he said: 'I myself am a slave of Allāh. If people – due to their ignorance and unbelief - claim that I am a god, it is not my fault.'" (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 81)

Note: This shows the extreme self-respect of Hadrat Maryam *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* who was not prepared to tolerate any disobedience to Allāh *taʿālā*, in fact, to any partnership in His divinity. Consequently, she did not bother in the least about Hadrat ʿĪsā *ʿalayhis salām* – the fruit of her love – in comparison to Allāh *taʿālā*. There is a powerful admonition in this for us all. We must not bother about anyone when it comes to the orders of Allāh *taʿālā*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

لا طاعة لمخلوق في معصية الخالق

"Obedience to the creation is not permissible when it entails disobedience to the Creator."

Demise

He passed away in 311 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 81)

Hadrat Imām Ibn Khuzaymah *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Ishāq, his grandfather's name is Khuzaymah, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bakr as-Sulamī.

Merits

He was a *hāfiz* of Hadīth, a scholar who was quoted as a proof, and a jurist. He is an author of many books. He was inclined to Hadīth and *fiqh* from the beginning of his life, and spent all his efforts in acquiring these sciences. This eventually led to scholars mentioning him as an example of vast knowledge and acumen.

He writes about his procedure when writing: "When I intended writing anything, I would first perform the salāh of *istikhārah* so that the way may be opened for me. I would then commence writing."

Opinions of the *muhaddithīn*

Rabī' ibn Sulaymān *rahimahullāh* posed this question: "Do you people know Ibn Khuzaymah?" We replied: "Yes." He said: "We benefited more from him than what he benefited from us."

Hāfiz Abū 'Alī Nīshāpūrī says: "I did not see anyone like Ibn Khuzaymah." He adds: "Ibn Khuzaymah remembered those Ahādīth which are

related to *fiqh* just as well as a *hāfiz* of the Qur'ān remembers sūrahs of the Qur'ān."

Abū Hātim ibn Hibbān Tamīmī says: "I have not seen anyone who remembers the sciences of Hadīth, remembers its authentic and superfluous words except for Muhammad ibn Is-hāq. It seemed as though all the Ahādīth were before his eyes." (*Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14, p. 165)

Dāraqutnī *rahimahullāh* said that Ibn Khuzaymah was an imām without parallel.

His grandson relates: "Our grandfather would not set aside and save even the smallest amount of money. He used to spend all of it on the *'ulamā'*."

Note: This shows the true acumen of an *'ālim* of *Dīn* – not only did he know the merit of spending one's wealth, but would practise on it.

Statements

Someone asked him: "How did you acquire such extraordinary knowledge?" He replied: "Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: 'For whatever purpose zam zam water is consumed, that purpose will be fulfilled.' Whenever I drank zam zam water, I asked Allāh *ta'ālā* for beneficial knowledge." (*A'yān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 183)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an easy prescription to acquire beneficial knowledge. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us all with beneficial knowledge and inspire us to practise on it. Āmīn.

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Demise

He passed away in Dhū al-Qaʿdah 311 A.H. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 14, p. 365)

Hadrat Abū Jaʿfar Ahmad ibn Hamdān *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is Ahmad, his father's name is Hamdān, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Jaʿfar. He was born around 240 A.H.

Merits

He is from among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Nīshāpūr. He was a pious and righteous man. He was an imām, ascetic and leader of his time. His *duʿās* used to be readily accepted, and he was a mountain of knowledge. He remained in the company of Abū ʿUthmān and Abū Hafs.

Abū ʿUthmān says: "The person who would like to see a person who treads the path of fear [of Allāh *taʿālā*] should look at Abū Jaʿfar." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14, p. 299)

Statements

1. "For obedient servants to vex their pride over sinners by virtue of their acts of obedience is worse than the sins [of the sinners], and it is more harmful to them than the actual sins. In like manner, for a sinner to be heedless of repentance after committing a sin is worse than the sin itself."

2. "You have just one suspicion of sin against a person and you begin to detest him. Whereas you

have absolute knowledge of the sins which are within you yet you do not detest yourself." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 88)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent advice which is worth paying attention to.

Demise

He passed away in 311 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abul Hasan Bannān ibn Muhammad ibn Hamdān al-Wāsitī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Bannān, his father's name is Muhammad, his grandfather's name is Hamdān, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan.

He was originally from Wāsit but settled down in Egypt. However, he is referred to as Wāsitī based on his original birth place. He used to engage in abundant worship to the extent that it used to be used as an example. He was a high ranking person, and never accepted any gifts from the rulers. (*Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14, p. 488)

An admonitory incident

A man owed 100 dīnārs to another person. When the creditor asked his debtor to repay his loan, the debtor asked him to produce the written proof that he owed him the money. The creditor could not find the document. So he went to Hadrat Bannān requesting him to make *du'ā* that he finds the document. He said to him: "I am an old man who likes *halwā* (a sweetmeat). Go to Dār-e-Faraj and bring me a kilo of *halwā*. I will make *du'ā* for you in the meantime." The man bought the *halwā* and brought it to Hadrat Bannān. He asked him to open the package and the document [which the debtor was asking] was inside. On seeing it, the man said: "This is the document

which I was looking for." Hadrat Bannān said: "Take the document, and take this *halwā* and feed it to your children." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14, p. 488)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a clear *karāmat* of Shaykh Bannān which is a fact and worthy of acceptance. I think that a greater *karāmat* was that he did not even taste the *halwā* but returned it to the person so that he does not have any bad thoughts about the shaykh adopting this way out of greed and desire for *halwā*. In fact, we can certainly say that had he asked for the *halwā* with this intention, the *karāmat* would not have been displayed. Our *Ahlullāh* are fully aware of the psychology of people, and are cautious in every matter so that they themselves may be saved from disrepute and they may save others from falling into evil thoughts.

Hadrat Thānwī's *rahimahullāh* caution

It was the practice of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* that when anyone gave him thread for the sake of making a *taʿwīdh* (amulet), he would only take a length of thread which was necessary and return the balance to the owner even before he could read and blow onto it. He used to say: "I return it so that the thought does not cross his mind that I might retain the remaining thread by me."

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat's *rahimahullāh* caution

In like manner, I observed the following practice of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*: While taking a walk, if he were to see fresh chick-peas or peas, he would say to those who are with him to purchase them. They were normally sold for four *ānās*. On returning home, he would immediately instruct one of us to go and give the money to the person. He would say to us: "The person might think to himself: 'This is a shaykh, I do not know whether he will pay me or not.'" In order to save the person from such thoughts, he would send a person by rickshaw to the seller's house with the money. He was very particular about absolute clarity in all matters. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to be clear in all our transactions so that our lack of clarity and caution does not bring a bad name to the *Ashrafī silsilah* (those aligned to the spiritual chain of Hadrat Hakīmūl Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*).

Statements

1. "I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* in a dream and he said to me: 'O Bannān!' I said: 'I am at your service, O Rasūlullāh!' He said: 'When a person eats out of greed of his *nafs*, Allāh *ta'ālā* causes the eyes of his heart to become blind.' On hearing this, my eyes opened and I made a promise to myself not to eat a stomach full in future. I had eaten two *rotīs* and a cup of *masūr* (a pulse) that night."

Note: Allāh *taʿālā* is the essential and original *murabbī* (guide), and He makes arrangements for the training and tutoring of His special servants. I think that it was in the light of these teachings that the Sufis encourage *qillat-e-taʿām* (eating less).

2. "I met Hadrat Abū Jaʿfar Haddād in Egypt and said to him: 'From all the knowledge which you have, tell me something which will be of benefit to me.' He said: 'Take as little as possible from this world, and be happy with lowness in this world.' I said: 'This is enough for me, this is enough for me.'" Allāh knows best. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 84)

Demise

He passed away in 316 A.H. in Egypt. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 84)

Hadrat Abul Husayn ibn Bannān al-Hammāl *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Abul Husayn and his father's name is Bannān al-Hammāl.

Merits

He is one of the senior *mashā'ikh* of Egypt. He had the opportunity of being in the company of Hadrat Abū Saʿīd Kharrāz and others.

Statements

1. "The Sufi whose heart is filled with worry about sustenance should make sure he works. This will be a means of gaining more proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*. By work it is meant he must engage in a craft, take up a job, etc."

2. "Abstain from ignoble character just as you abstain from what is *harām* (unlawful)."

3. "Engaging in *dhikr* with the tongue ensures progress in rank, and engaging in *dhikr* with the heart is a means of gaining proximity."

Note: Glory to Allāh! This proves the merit of verbal *dhikr* as well. When a person is constant in it, it gradually progresses to *dhikr* with the heart.

4. "According respect to the ranks of the *Auliyā'* of Allāh *taʿālā* is only done by the one who

himself is of high rank in Allāh's sight." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 96)

Demise

He passed away in 316 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower him with His mercy. (*Kitāb al-Ansāb*, vol. 2, p. 299)

Hadrat Abū ʿAmr Dimishqī *rahimahullāh*

He is well known by the name Abū ʿAmr Dimishqī.

Merits

He was a senior *buzurg* of Shām. All the *ʿulamā'* of Shām had confidence in him. As regards the sciences of *tasawwuf*, he remained in the company of the *murīds* of Abū ʿAbdillāh Muhammad ibn Jallā' and Dhun Nūn Misrī *rahimahumallāh*.

Statements

1. "Allāh *taʿālā* imposed on the *auliyā'* to conceal their *karāmāt* (supernatural feats) so that the masses do not fall into tribulation. And He made it obligatory on the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* to display their miracles so that they can be proofs for the truth."

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is a most enlightening statement because it explains the difference between a miracle (*muʿjizah*) and a *karāmat*.

2. "*Tasawwuf* entails turning a blind eye to every defective thing so that a person may see that Being who is pure of every defect and fault."

Note: This shows that looking at defective things will cause a person to remain defective himself. And if he focuses his sight on the Being who is

the nucleus of all excellences and perfections, Allāh *taʿālā* bestows him with excellence.

3. "A sign of hard-heartedness is when Allāh *taʿālā* causes a person to turn his attention to his own planning. He becomes so attached to his own planning that it does not even cross his mind to ask Allāh *taʿālā* for His protection. Whereas Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to say: 'O Allāh! Protect me as You protect a new-born.'"

Note: This shows that when Allāh *taʿālā* bestows us with *Dīnī* or worldly favours through His grace, it must cause us to turn to Him even more. We must make *duʿā* to Him to protect it for us, and to be able to fulfil its right as much as possible. This is the right of servitude. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

4. "When the souls are purified of all filth by virtue of Allāh's proximity, the light of agreement becomes obvious on the outward bodies. The outward appearance becomes illuminated through the showering of divine light."

Demise

He passed away in 320 A.H. and was buried in Damascus. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 350)

Hadrat Abul Hasan Muhammad al-Warrāq *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Saʿīd, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan. He was a companion of Abū ʿUthmān and from among the senior *mashā'ikh*.

Merits

He undertook exhaustive work on the *Sunan*. He believed in the external sciences (*zāhirī ʿulūm*). He carried out scholarly research on the science of transactions. In the same way, he also researched faults and actions.

Statements

1. "The fear of severing family ties has dissolved the hearts of the lovers [of Allāh *taʿālā*] and burnt the hearts of the *ʿārifīn*."

Note: This shows the detestability of severing family ties. It is essential to abstain from it. The Hadīth stresses the virtue and importance of maintaining family ties. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* issues an express order:

صل من قطعك

"Maintain ties with those who sever them."

2. “Displaying nobility in pardoning a person entails not even thinking of how you pardoned your fellow brother.”

3. “The revival of dead hearts lies in the *dhikr* of the Being who is ever-living.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent statement! It ought to be written in gold.

4. “In the initial stages of our *sulūk* (treading the path of *tasawwuf*), we used to live in the musjid of Hadrat Abū ʿUthmān Hiyarī *rahimahullāh*. We were ordered not to hold back anything which Allāh *taʿālā* bestowed to us. We must give preference to others by giving it to them and not spending the night with anything of what we were given. As for the person who treats us badly, we must not exact any revenge from him. Instead, we should apologize to him and submit ourselves before him. And when our hearts think of a person as being inferior, we must hasten to serve him and show kindness to him so that these feelings of scorn will come out of our hearts.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the system of training and nurturing of our senior Sufis. This resulted in the purification of the hearts of the *sālikīn*. These qualities are totally absent today. Let alone practising on them, we do not even have knowledge of them, and do not pay any attention to them. How, then, can rectification and reformation be achieved? And how can the system

of the *khānqāh* be beneficial? We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

5. "The most beneficial knowledge is knowledge of Allāh's orders and prohibitions, promises and warnings, and rewards and punishments. And the highest knowledge is knowledge of Allāh *taʿālā* and His names and attributes."

Note: Unfortunately there is a trend to disregard these branches of knowledge. In fact, other sciences are given preference over knowledge of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. The consequences of this are obvious. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

6. "Affinity with the creation really entails terror of them. Gaining solace from them is foolishness. Finding peace with them is a sign of helplessness. Reliance on them is a sign of forgetfulness. Placing one's trust in them results in one's destruction." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 87)

Demise

He passed away before 320 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Muhammad ibn ʿAlī at-Tirmidhī Hakīm *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is ʿAlī, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and he is well known as Hakīm Tirmidhī.

Merits

He was an imām, *hāfiz, ʿārif* and ascetic of his time. He met Abū Turāb Nakhbashī. He remained in the company of Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh ibn Jallā' and Ahmad ibn Hadrawīyyah. He was one of the senior *mashā'ikh* of Khurāsān. He wrote many books on Hadīth and these are well known. (*Tabaqāt*)

Statements

1. "The goodness of children lies in the *madrasah*. The goodness of youngsters lies in knowledge. The goodness of middle-aged people lies in the musjid. The goodness of women lies in the home. The goodness of harmful people lies in the prisons." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 13, p. 439)

Note: These are very useful statements. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to practise on them. Āmīn.

2. "Allāh *taʿālā* called the people of *tauhīd* (believers) towards salāh five times a day out of His special mercy. He made various types of arrangements for their hospitality so that a

servant may acquire something or the other from Allāh's gifts through every word and action of his. So actions are like different foods, and words are like different types of drinks. These people are the people of the ʿArsh (Throne) of Oneness."

Note: This is why all components of salāh – whether verbal or physical – must be fulfilled with total consideration to the Sunnah. In this way, we will be able to enjoy the gifts of Allāh *taʿālā*.

3. "The goodness of children lies in the *madrasah*, the goodness of crooks lies in the prisons, and the goodness of women lies in the homes." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 78)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What words of wisdom and cognition! Acting on them will ensure goodness and well-being in our *Dīn* and worldly life.

Demise

He passed away around 320 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*al-Aʿlām*, vol. 6, p. 272)

Hadrat Muhammad ibn Ismāʿīl Khayr Nassāj *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Ismāʿīl, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan. His title is Nassāj and he is well-known by this title. His year of birth is not known with certainty, but it is said that he was born in 202 A.H.

Merits

He was not well-known by his name and *kunnīyyat*, but became popular by his title, Nassāj, in the world of *tasawwuf*. He was originally from Sāmarrā but settled down in Baghdad. He remained in the company of Shaykh Abū Hamzah Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* and also benefited from the company of Shaykh Surī Saqatī *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Khawwās *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Shiblī *rahimahullāh* repented in his assembly, and he was a teacher of a large group of people.

An admonitory incident

He relates: "I had made a promise to Allāh *taʿālā* that I will never eat dates. But one day I was overpowered by my *nafs* and I was forced to eat some. When I finished eating the dates, a person stared at me and screamed out: 'O Khayr, you runaway slave! Where will you go to now?' This man had a slave by the name of Khayr who had fled, and he mistook me for his slave. On hearing

his scream, many people gathered and said: 'By Allāh, this is your slave, Khayr.' I was astonished at what they were saying, but I immediately realized why I was being captured in this way. I realized my error [of breaking my promise]. I was apprehended, taken to this man's factory where his slave used to weave fabric. On taking me there, he said to me: 'O you disobedient slave! You fled but you have been captured. Go and do the work which you used to do.' I proceeded to the weaving machine, sat down, lowered my legs onto the stand and began weaving as though I had been weaving for years. It did not take me much time to complete my task and the master was even more convinced that I was his slave, Khayr. I continued in this way for four months."

"I got up one night for worship, performed *wuḏū'*, fell into prostration, and presented myself in Allāh's *taʿālā* court saying: 'O Allāh! I will not repeat the mistake which I made previously.' The next morning, my similarity with the slave ended, I returned to my original appearance, and I gained freedom from this difficult situation. But I now came to be known as Nassāj (a weaver). On account of my breaking my promise with Allāh *taʿālā*, I was punished by becoming known as Nassāj." (*Nafaḫātul Uns*, p. 318)

Statements

1. "Patience is one of the characteristics of Allāh's *taʿālā* special servants. And acceptance [of Allāh's

decree] is one of the characteristics of noble people."

2. "The thing which conveys a person to the point of perfection is when he looks at his own shortcomings, worthlessness and weakness."

Note: Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* describes this as follows: "The one who sees and understands a defect within himself runs swiftly to rectify his defect."

The manner of his demise

ʿAllāmah Qushayrī *rahimahullāh* describes his death as follows: I heard from Shaykh Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sulamī who heard from Abul Hasan Qazawīnī who heard from Abul Husayn Mālikī who said: "I asked a person who was present at the time of the death of Khayr Nassāj to describe his condition to me. He said: 'He fell unconscious at the time of *maghrib salāh*. He opened his eyes after some time, pointed to a corner of the house and said: 'Wait. May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you with wellness (*ʿāfiyat*). You are servants who are commanded [by Allāh *taʿālā*] and I am also a servant. You will be able to do what you have been commanded to do but I will not be able to do it [because I am about to die].' He then asked for water, performed *wudū'* for salāh, performed salāh, lied down, closed his eyes, read the *kalimah shahādah*, and passed away. Later on, someone saw him in a dream and asked him how Allāh treated him. He said to the person: 'Do not

ask me about that. I have gained freedom from your rotten world and found peace.'" (*Rūh Tasawwuf*, p. 86, *Tarjumah Risālah Qushayrīyyah*)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the lofty position which he enjoyed – it was not the position of a *murīd* (disciple) but of a *murād* (one who is followed). This the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He bestows on whomever He wills.

Demise

He passed away in 322 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafahātul Uns*)

Hadrat Abū Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Jaʿfar al-Kattānī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Abū Bakr and his father's name is Muhammad ibn ʿAlī.

Merits

He was originally from Baghdad but settled down in Makkah. He remained in the company of Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* and others. Hadrat Murtaʿish *rahimahullāh* used to say that Kattānī is the Sirāj al-Harām (the light of the Haram Sharīf).

Statements

1. "When you ask Allāh *taʿālā* for *taufīq* (inspiration to do good), you must hasten in doing good deeds."

2. "You may live in this world with your body, but live with your heart in the Hereafter."

3. He saw an old man begging so he said with regard to him: "He cast aside Allāh's laws when he was young, so Allāh *taʿālā* cast him aside in his old age."

Note: We learn that we must fulfil Allāh's rights from a young age so that we are not deprived of His protection in old age.

4. “When a servant displays true poverty [need] for Allāh *taʿālā*, He showers His kindness and attention to him. This is because both are inseparable.”

5. “Fame is Satan’s rein. The person who hold Satan’s rein will reach Satan.”

6. He was asked: “What are the Sunnats regarding which there are no differences?” He replied: “Abstinence in this world, open heartedness, and desire for the creation’s well-being.” He was asked: “What is the meaning of abstinence in this world?” He replied: “When you are happy in your heart by the loss of a possession of yours. You must continuously bear the pains caused by the creation. And whatever pains they cause you, you must say with regard to them: ‘I deserved more than what I received.’ And you must think to yourself that you were suited for the fire, but you got the ash.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a general meaning of abstinence. It is as though he explained the essence of *tasawwuf*.

7. “Initially we used to perform salāh the entire night with the *wudū’* of *ʿishā*, but if we saw anyone sleeping, we considered him better than us.”

8. “I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream, so I said to him: ‘O Rasūlullāh! Make *duʿā* for me so that Allāh *taʿālā* does not cause

my heart to die.' Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: 'You must read [the following] forty times daily.'" (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 95)

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

"O the Ever-living! O the Eternal! There is none worthy of worship except You."

Note: ʿAllāmah Ibn Taymīyyah *rahimahullāh* writes that the person who reads [the following] daily between the *sunnah* and *fard* of the *fajr salāh* will be bestowed with a 'living' heart. (*Madārij as-Sālikīn*, vol. 3, p. 264)

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ لَآ إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

"O the Ever-living! O the Eternal! There is none worthy of worship except You."

9. "Allāh *taʿālā* says: 'When a person gets up with two thoughts in the morning, I turn away from him: (1) thoughts of committing a sin, (2) thoughts of how he is going to earn wealth."

10. "The living of the unmindful is in Allāh's pardon. The living of the *dhākirīn* (those who remember Allāh *taʿālā* constantly) is in Allāh's mercy. The living of the *ʿārifīn* (those who have truly recognized Allāh *taʿālā*) is in Allāh's mercies. The living of the *sādiqīn* (those who are true to Allāh *taʿālā*) is in Allāh's proximity and acceptance."

11. “When the reality of the truth becomes clear, assumptions and conjecture disappear. This is because when the truth becomes absolutely clear to a person, the only effect which remains behind is the effect of the truth.”

12. “The *maʿrifat* of Allāh *taʿālā* is higher and superior to His worship.”

Note: Obviously, worship of Allāh *taʿālā* is for the sake of His *maʿrifat*.

Demise

He passed away in 322 A.H. My Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 95)

Hadrat Ismāʿīl ibn Nujayd ibn Ahmad ibn Yūsuf as-Sulamī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ismāʿīl, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAmr, and his father's name is Nujayd ibn Ahmad.

Merits

He remained in the company of Hadrat Abū ʿUthmān, and also met Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*. He is the maternal grandfather of the famous Shaykh Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān as-Sulamī *rahimahullāh*. He was one of the senior *mashā'ikh* of his time. He used to value time greatly. He is listed among the senior *muhaddithīn* and pious personalities.

Statements

1. He used to say:

رُبَّ سُكُوْتٍ أَبْلَغُ مِنْ كَلَامٍ

"Remaining silent may well be more beneficial than talking."

2. He was asked: "What is it that man should not be heedless of?" He replied: "To be constant in his servitude to Allāh *taʿālā* in accordance with the Sunnah, and to be vigilant about his heart."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What excellent advice which ought to be practised upon. May Allāh *taʿālā* give us inspiration.

3. "To attach your heart to anything apart from Allāh *taʿālā* is a cause of isolation." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 488)

4. "The person who considers himself to be great must realize that his *Dīn* has become wretched."

5. "A person's servitude cannot be pure as long as he does not consider all his [good] actions to be ostentation and all his [lofty spiritual] conditions to be claims."

6. "When Allāh *taʿālā* wills good for a person, He inspires him to serve the *sālihīn* (righteous) and have love for them, and the person accepts whatever they indicate to him. Allāh *taʿālā* opens the way for good for him, and safeguards him against ostentation."

7. "The person who expresses his own good qualities to one who can neither benefit nor harm him has actually expressed his own ignorance." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 103)

Demise

He was from among the last of the companions of Abū ʿUthmān *rahimahullāh* to pass away. He passed away in 326 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 103)

Hadrat Abū Is-hāq Ibrāhīm ibn Dā'ūd Qasārifī *raḥimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Is-hāq, and his grand-father's name is Dā'ūd.

Merits

He is listed among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Shām. He was from among the contemporaries of Junayd *raḥimahullāh* and Abū Jallā' *raḥimahullāh*, and used to sit with them. He lived a long life and had the opportunity of being with most of the senior *mashā'ikh* of Shām.

Statements

1. "Two things are sufficient for success in *Dīn*: (1) companionship of practising *'ulamā'*, (2) love for the *auliyā'*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent prescription which ought to be embossed in our hearts.

2. "It is so unfortunate that our *basārat* (outer physical eyesight) is strong, but our *basīrah* (sight of the heart) is weak."

Note: The misfortune which he is talking about is that our physical eyes are strong but internal spiritual sight is weak, whereas our internal sight ought to have been stronger.

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Demise

He passed away in 326 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 102)

Hadrat Abū ʿAlī Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Thaqafī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAlī, and his father's name is ʿAbd al-Wahhāb.

Merits

He met Hadrat Abū Hafs and Hamdūn Qassār. He was an imām in most of the sciences of the Sharīʿah, and proficient in every field. But he cast aside most of these sciences, became engrossed in the science of the Sufis, and did good work in the field of *tasawwuf* which came to the fore in Nīshāpūr through him. He was a gifted shaykh in speaking about the tragedies of actions and defects of the *nafs*.

Statements

1. "The one who does not remain in the service of the elders will be deprived of their benefits and the blessings of their gaze. None of their blessings will manifest on him."

Note: We learn from this that the gaze of the pious elders is chemical, which brings blessings with it.

2. "The person who is overcome by desires will find his intellect going blank."

3. "Even if a person amasses all the different sciences and remains in the company of different

groups, he cannot reach the level of the close associates of Allāh *taʿālā* as long as he does not practise under the supervision of a shaykh, imām, advisor or one who disciplines him. If a person does not seek etiquette (*adab*) from one who commands and prohibits, who shows him the faults of his actions and weaknesses of his *nafs*; then it is not permissible to follow such a person for the correction of one's transactions."

Note: So pay heed, O people of intelligence.

4. "This *ummat* will experience a time when a Muslim's livelihood will not be in order as long as he does not seek help from a hypocrite."

5. In the course of his talks, he would say: "O people who have sold all their possessions without any exchange, and bought absolutely nothing in return for their entire wealth!" (*Tabaqāt*, p. 92)

Demise

He passed away in 328 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abul Hasan ʿAlī ibn Muhammad al-Muzayn *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAlī, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan, and his father's name is Muhammad. He hails from Baghdad.

Merits

He remained in the company of Sahl ibn ʿAbdillāh *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*. He also benefited from other famous *mashā'ikh* of Baghdad. He then moved from Baghdad and settled down in the neighbourhood of the Kaʿbah.

Statements

1. He said

اَلْكَلَامُ مِنْ غَيْرِ ضَرُوْرَةٍ مَقْتُ اللهِ تَعَالَى بِالْعَبْدِ

"Speaking unnecessarily is [a sign of] Allāh's taʿālā displeasure and anger with a person."

Hadrat Shaykh al-Islam *rahimahullāh* said: "Remain attached to actions because you will achieve nothing but being taken to task for speaking."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What excellent advice which ought to be practised upon.

2. Shaykh al-Islam relates that a lion came before Abūl Hasan Muzayn *rahimahullāh*, so he said:

ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ

"He then caused him to die and placed him in the grave." (Sūrah ʿAbasa, 80: 21)

On hearing this verse, the lion died there and then. When he reached a mountain top, he read:

ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْشَرَهُ

"Then when He wills, He raises him [to life]." (Sūrah ʿAbasa, 80: 22)

The lion came back to life immediately and stood up." (*Nafahātul Uns,* p. 258)

Note: Glory to Allāh! This was a clear *karāmat* of the shaykh. Such feats are performed periodically by the *auliyā'*.

3. "Committing another sin after having committed a sin is actually a punishment for the previous sin. And doing a good deed after having done a good deed is actually a reward for the previous good deed."

Note: We should therefore make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* to protect us from sin and inspire us to do good.

4. “If a person does not become independent and self-sufficient after placing his full trust in Allāh’s *taʿālā* mercy and kindness, Allāh *taʿālā* causes him to become dependent on the creation. If a person becomes independent and self-sufficient by placing his trust in Allāh *taʿālā*, Allāh *taʿālā* causes the creation to become dependent on the person.” (*Rūh Tasawwuf*, p. 93)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a clear fact which ought to be written in gold.

5. He was asked about *tauhīd* so he said: “*Tauhīd* entails believing in Allāh *taʿālā* as one through *maʿrifat*. Consider Him to be one in your worship as well. And also consider Him to be one when turning to Him as regards profit and loss. You should understand well that the slightest doubt [with regard to Allāh *taʿālā*] which passes your heart, and no matter how much you can refer to it [that doubt], Allāh *taʿālā* is totally different from it. You must understand that the qualities and attributes of Allāh *taʿālā* are totally different from the qualities and attributes of the creation. Just as Allāh *taʿālā* is different from the creation as regards His eternal attributes, the creation is different from Him as regards their current attributes.”

6. “The person who has any pride over his actions has actually succumbed to *istidrāj*. The person who feels he has reached Allāh *taʿālā* is in deception. The person with the best condition among Allāh’s servants is the one who does not

know his own condition, who sees no one but Allāh *taʿālā*, who does not experience affinity with anyone except Allāh *taʿālā*, and who has no yearning for anyone except Allāh *taʿālā*."

7. "Pride or conceit in a person is a cause of Allāh's *taʿālā* displeasure. Sometimes, this conceit conveys the person to eternal displeasure. This is why we ask Allāh *taʿālā* for *ʿāfiyat* (well-being, wellness)." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 96)

Demise

He passed away in 328 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Muhammad ibn Manāzil Nīshāpūrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh, his father's name is Muhammad, his grandfather's name is Manāzil, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad.

Merits

He falls into the fourth level of the Sufis. He became well known by the name of ʿAbdullāh ibn Manāzil. He is from among the senior *mashā'ikh*. He is alone in his *maslak* (school of thought). He benefited from the company of Shaykh Hamdān Qassār and acquired knowledge of the Tarīqah from him. He was also proficient in the external sciences.

A senior shaykh says: "I know a total man, and half a man. The total man is Shaykh ʿAbdullāh ibn Manāzil who does not even speak about people."

Note: In other words, he is so aloof from everything apart from Allāh *taʿālā* that he does not speak about anyone – whether good qualities or bad qualities.

"And the half man is Shaykh Nasr Ābādī who never spoke ill of anyone."

Statements

1. "There is no good for a person who enters *ta<u>s</u>awwuf* by force; he is destroyed. As for the one who enters with humility and submission, he becomes strong. In other words, he does not enter this path [of *ta<u>s</u>awwuf*] by making claims and showing his strength. Instead, he enters with humility."

Note: Glory to Allāh! He considers the qualities of humility and submission to be prerequisites for entry into the Tarīqah. This is most worthy of practising on.

2. "The person who considers essential for himself something which he does not need is actually distancing from himself things which he is in need of and which he cannot do without." (*Nafa<u>h</u>ātul Uns*, p. 425)

3. "If a person disregards any compulsory duty of Allāh *taʿālā*, He will cause him to fall into the misery of disregarding the Sunnats. And the one who disregards the Sunnats may well fall into committing *bidʿāt* (innovations)." (*Rū<u>h</u> Ta<u>s</u>awwuf*)

Note: This shows how important it is to be mindful of the *farā'i<u>d</u>* (compulsory duties) and Sunnats. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us all to show due regard for them. Āmīn.

4. "If you yourself cannot benefit from your knowledge, how do you expect others to benefit from it?"

5. “Even if a single breath in a person’s entire life passes without *shirk* (ascribing partners with Allāh *taʿālā*) and ostentation, the blessing of it will remain until the end.”

Note: Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* says: “Man is engrossed in his pleasures and desires, therefore you would rarely find any worship or good deed of his pure of worldly motive. So if even one moment from his entire life remains pure for Allāh *taʿālā*, he will gain salvation. This is because sincerity is very rare, and it is very difficult for the heart to remain pure and clean from whisperings and thoughts [of this world].” (*Muwāfaqāt* of Imām Shātibī, vol. 2, p. 214)

6. “Why are you displaying submission while you are concealing the qualities of divinity within you?” (In other words, qualities such as pride and greatness are prerogatives of Allāh *taʿālā*. If you have such qualities, how can you be a true slave of Allāh *taʿālā*!?)

Note: Unfortunately, we do not try to protect ourselves. Pride, arrogance, etc. have become most common. This has caused evil and corruption to spread everywhere.

Demise

He passed away in 329 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 92)

Hadrat Sayyid Abul Hasan ʿAlī ibn Sahl as-Sā'igh ad-Dīnaurī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAlī, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan, and his father's name is Sahl.

Merits

He was from among the senior *mashā'ikh* and commanded a lot of awe. Anyone who looked at him was over-awed by him.

Statements

1. "Whenever our brothers get together, it is essential for them to enjoin each other with the true religion and with patience. This is because Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

"and enjoin each other with the true religion, and enjoin each other with patience." (Sūrah al-ʿAsr, 103: 3)

Demise

He passed away in Egypt in 330 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 87)

Hadrat Abū Bakr ibn Tāhir Abhurī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh, his father's name is Tāhir, his grandfather's name is Hārith, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bakr.

Merits

He is from the fourth level of Sufis. He holds a high position among the *mashā'ikh* and is a contemporary of Hadrat Shiblī *rahimahullāh*. He was a very pious *ʿālim*. He spent some time in the company of Shaykh Yūsuf ibn Husayn, and was a companion of Muzaffar Kurmān Shāhī.

Shaykh Muhallab ibn Ahmad *rahimahullāh* says: "I did not benefit from any other shaykh as much as I benefited from Shaykh Abū Bakr Tāhir *rahimahullāh*." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 370)

Statements

1. "*Tauhīd* is not incapable of putting an end to past *kufr* nor of later sins." (In other words, it puts an end to all past and future sins). (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, p. 370)

2. Mansūr ibn ʿAbdillāh says that he said: "A Sufi cannot have a desire for anything. If there is no way out of having a desire, he can only desire as much as would suffice his need [and no more]."

3. “If you love a person for Allāh’s sake, reduce your interaction with him on worldly matters.” (*Rūh Tasawwuf-tarjumah ar-Risālah al-Qushayrīyyah*)

4. Someone said to him: “We have been told that a person will bear and accommodate his teacher’s warning and scolding more than what he would of his parents’.” He replied: “This is because his parents are the means for his temporary life, while his teacher and the one who disciplines him are the means for his eternal abode. This is confirmed by the following statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

اُغْدُ عَالِمًا أَوْ مُتَعَلِّمًا، وَلاَ تَكُنْ فِيْمَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فَتَهْلِكُ

“You may be an ʿālim or a student, but do not be anything between the two or else you will be destroyed.”

Note: Another narration has some additions to the above. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

اغد عالما أو متعلما أو مستمعا أو محبا ولا تكن الخامسة فتهلك (فيض القدير، ج٢، ص١٧).

“You may be an ʿālim, a student, one who is listening [to knowledge being imparted], or one who loves [Allāh taʿālā], but do not be the fifth, or else you will be destroyed.”

5. “Three things are acquired from calamities and miseries: (1) purification, (2) atonement, (3) admonition [and reminder]. Purification from major sins, atonement of minor sins, and admonition to those who are pure of heart.”

Note: In other words, When a person experiences calamities and miseries, he acquires one of three things: purification from major sins, pardon for minor sins, or those who are pure of heart will acquire additional admonition which will enable them to acquire higher stages in rank.

Demise

He passed away in 330 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Ṯabaqāt*, p. 112)

Hadrat Abū Yaʿqūb Is-hāq ibn Muhammad an-Nahrjaurī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Is-hāq, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Yaʿqūb, and his grandfather's name is Muhammad.

Merits

He remained in the company of Abū ʿAmr Makkī, Abū Yaʿqūb Sūsī, Junayd Baghdādī and many other *mashā'ikh*, and benefited from them. He settled down in Makkah Mukarramah.

Statements

1. "The world is an ocean whose shore is the Hereafter. The ship in this ocean is *taqwā*, and its passengers are the creation."

2. "The person who feels satisfaction from food will always remain hungry. The person whose affluence lies in wealth will always remain a pauper. The person whose heart is inclined to the gifts of people will always remain deprived. The person who seeks the help of anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā* in any matter will always remain disappointed and disgraced."

3. "The more a person recognizes Allāh *taʿālā* the more lost he will feel [the more he will desire to progress in his recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*]."

4. He was asked about the path to Allāh *taʿālā*, so he said: "(1) Stay far from ignorant people, (2)

remain in the company of the *ʿulamā'*, (3) practise on your knowledge, and remain constant on *dhikr* of Allāh *taʿālā*. Only then will you join the people of the Tarīqah." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 95)

Note: Those following the path of *tasawwuf* must bear this definition in mind so that it becomes easy for them to practise in the correct manner.

Demise

He passed away in Makkah Mukarramah in 330 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 95)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Khafīf Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Khafīf, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh.

Merits

He was a *shaykh al-mashā'ikh* (shaykh of shaykhs) of his time. This is why he is known as Shaykh al-Islam. He is a student of Shaykh Abū Tālib Kharzaj.

Shaykh al-Islam says: "No one has written as much as him on the science of *tasawwuf*." He was a man of pure beliefs and excellent qualities. He was a follower of the Shāfiʿī *madh-hab*.

Definition of *tasawwuf*

People asked him about *tasawwuf*, so he said:

وجود الله في عين الغفلة

"To remember Allāh taʿālā even at the exact time of heedlessness."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a comprehensive definition of *tasawwuf*. The virtue and merit of remembering Allāh *taʿālā* is proven from both the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to engage in His remembrance as much as

possible so that we may be people of *tasawwuf* in the true sense of the word.

Adherence to *'ibādah*

Since childhood it was his habit not to allow any time to go to waste. After the *fajr salāh*, he would engage in the recitation of the Qur'ān. Once the sun rose considerably, he would perform the *ishrāq salāh*, and then occupy himself in his work. He would perform *zuhr salāh* at its time, and then perform optional salāhs until *'asr*. After the *'asr salāh*, he would study Hadīth until the evening. He would occupy himself in *awrād wa wazā'if* (different forms of *dhikr*) after the *maghrib salāh* and continue until *'ishā*. After the *'ishā salāh* he would complete his other *wazā'if*, proceed home, have supper, write down forty Ahādīth, and sleep for a short while. He would then wake up and occupy himself in *tahajjud salāh* until the morning.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his worship and spiritual exercises due to which he was bestowed such lofty conditions. There is a saying:

اَلأَحْوَالُ ثَمَرَاتُ الأَعْمَالِ

"Conditions are the fruits of actions."

Statements

1. "The ascetic who does not irrigate his tree of asceticism with the water of knowledge will soon find his tree getting dried. The *'ārif* who does not

set right his *maʿrifat* through the Sharīʿah and does not check it against the Sharīʿah will soon be stripped off his *maʿrifat*."

2. "You must follow the following *mashā'ikh* of *tasawwuf*: Junayd Baghdādī, Ruwaym, Abul ʿAbbās ʿAtā', ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān because these personalities combined knowledge with the *haqīqah* (reality). Other *mashā'ikh* were people of *hāl* (conditions and states). When they were immersed in their *hāl*, they would say and do certain things, and when that state passed, they considered it essential to repent and seek forgiveness from those things [which they said or did while in that state]." (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 2, p. 27)

Demise

He passed away in 331 A.H./942 C.E. The book, *Aʿyān al-Hujjāj* states that he passed away in 371 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū Bakr ibn Yūnus ash-Shiblī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Jaʿfar, his father's name is Yūnus, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bakr. He is well-known by his *kunnīyyat*.

There are differences of opinion with regard to his name. *Hilyatul Auliyā'* mentions three names: (1) Dilf ibn Jahdar, (2) Jaʿfar ibn Yūnus, (3) Jaʿfar ibn Dilf. The name Jaʿfar ibn Yūnus is the correct one because this is what is written on his grave in Baghdad. (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 10, p. 339)

He was originally from Egypt but settled down in Baghdad. He presented himself in the assembly of Hadrat Khayr Nassāj *rahimahullāh*, repented, and chose the correct path of the Tarīqah. He is from among the *murīds* of Sayyid at-Tā'ifah Shaykh Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*. He enjoyed a distinguished position as regards his knowledge and spiritual state. He studied *fiqh* according to the *madh-hab* of Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*, and recorded many Ahādīth. He was a powerful *ʿālim* and jurist. He was a Mālikī and had memorized the *Muwattā'* of Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*.

The opinions of the *mashā'ikh* with regard to him

Shaykh at-Tarīqah Abū ʿAbd ar-Rahmān as-Sulamī, the author of *Tabaqāt as-Sūfīyyah*, says with regard to him: "Do not look at Abū Bakr

Shiblī as you look at each other with your eyes. Shiblī is one of the eyes of Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a lofty position he enjoyed. There is a Hadīth Qudsī in which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that Allāh *taʿālā* says: "A servant continues getting closer to Me through *nawāfil* (optional acts of worship) until I make him My beloved. Once I make him My beloved,

كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به، وبصره الذي يبصر به، ويده التي يبطش بها، ورجله التي يمشي بها.

"I become his ears with which he hears, his eyes with which he sees, his hand with which he holds, and his leg with which he walks." (Mishkāt, p. 197)

Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* said with regard to him: "Every nation has a crown, and Shiblī is the crown of the Sufis."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a great honour when the shaykh gives testimony of such a high position in favour of his *murīd*.

Statements

1. "The capital of time which you have must be spent in submission and surrender because this is the only capital which will remain with you."

Note: Surrendering [oneself before Allāh *taʿālā*] is a lofty position which stems from servitude

(*ʿabdīyyat*). This was a special quality of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He said:

العجز فخري (مجمع البحار، ج٣، ص٥٢٥)

"Surrendering [before Allāh *taʿālā*] is a source of pride for me."

May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow this condition to us and make it a means of gaining proximity and acceptance to Him.

2. "I had made a promise to myself that I will not eat anything except what was *halāl*. In other words, I will only eat what I was sure of its permissibility. I reached a fig tree one day, I broke a fig and was about to eat it when I heard a voice from beneath the fig saying: 'O Shiblī, do not eat me. Carry out your promise. I belong to a Jew.'"

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an admonition. Look at how Allāh *taʿālā* made arrangements for the fulfilment of his promise. This can only be done by the true *murabbī* (tutor), i.e. Allāh *taʿālā*. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone and He is the tutor of His servants.

3. Some people asked him: "What is strange?" He replied: "The heart which recognizes its Allāh and still commits sin." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 386)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent word of advice. This is sufficient for our admonition.

4. He was asked: “When does a person become a *murīd*?” He replied: “When his different conditions – whether he is travelling, at home, present, absent – are all the same.”

5. “A *siddīq* (a genuinely truthful person, a title which was given to Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*) who does not have a *muʿjizah* (miracle) is a *kadhdhāb* (a big liar).” When he went to Bīmāristān, the minister also went there and asked him: “What is the meaning of this statement: ‘A *siddīq* who does not have a miracle is a *kadhdhāb*?’ Now tell me, where is your miracle?” He replied: “My miracle is my obedience to Allāh’s *taʿālā* orders and prohibitions.”

Note: The word *muʿjizah* in this context refers to a *karāmat*. Obedience to Allāh’s orders and prohibitions refers to steadfastness on the Sharīʿah. There is a famous saying of the pious elders:

اَلإِسْتِقَامَةُ فَوْقَ الْكَرَامَةُ

“Steadfastness is superior to karāmat (supernatural feats).”

We constantly hear the following story: A person remained in the company of Hadrat Sayyidunā ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlānī *rahimahullāh* for quite some time but did not see any special *karāmat* in him. So he decided to leave. Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* asked him: “Why are you leaving?” He replied: “I stayed here for so long but did not

see any *karāmat* of yours." He asked: "Tell me, did you ever see me doing anything against the Sunnah?" The man replied: "No." He said: "Can ʿAbd al-Qādir's *karāmat* be considered insignificant that he did not displease his Allāh for so long? You may leave if you wish, I am not bothered."

6. "Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِلاَّ مَنْ أَتَى اللهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيْمٍ

"Except the one who comes to Allāh with a sound heart."

A sound heart refers to the heart of Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* because he remained free of and protected from breaking a promise and showing displeasure with Allāh's decree. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 90)

7. He was asked: "What is the meaning of this Hadīth:

إِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَلَاءِ فَاسْئَلُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الْعَافِيَةَ

"When you see ahl al-balā', ask Allāh taʿālā for well-being."

He said: "The *ahl al-balā'* are those who are heedless of Allāh *taʿālā*."

8. It is said that a person screamed in Hadrat Shiblī's assembly, so he was immersed in the Tigris River. Shiblī *rahimahullāh* said: "If he is a

genuine person, Allāh *taʿālā* will save him just as Allāh *taʿālā* had saved Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām*. If he is a liar, He will drown him as He drowned Pharaoh." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 90)

Demise

He passed away in 334 A.H. at the age of 87 and was buried in Baghdad. His grave is visited by many people.

Hadrat Abū Is-hāq Ibrāhīm ibn Shaybān al-Qarmsīnī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his father's name is Shaybān, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Is-hāq.

Merits

He is listed in the fourth level of *mashā'ikh*. He was the shaykh of Jabal. He enjoyed a high position in asceticism and piety. It was virtually impossible for people to emulate his asceticism and piety.

Statements

1. "The person who does not look at the *mashā'ikh* with respect and does not accord them the respect which they deserve is entrapped in false claims and empty pride. He is destined to humiliation."

2. "If you hear a Sufi saying: 'This is my shoe', then stay far from him. Remain in the company of a person who does not consider anything to be in his ownership."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a lesson of servitude and selflessness.

3. "My father advised me to seek knowledge for external etiquette, and choose *taqwā* for internal etiquette. Stay away from whatever keeps you away from Allāh *ta'ālā*. Rarely have I seen a

person turning away from something and then finding it as it was previously." (*Nafa<u>h</u>ātul Uns*, p. 434)

4. "Inclination towards the wealth and riches of the world is the thing which not only distanced but destroyed the Sufis from the path."

5. "If a person speaks about sincerity but does not demand it from his own self, Allāh *taʿālā* will expose him before his friends and brothers." (*<u>T</u>abaqāt*, p. 97)

<u>Demise</u>

He passed away in 337 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafa<u>h</u>ātul Uns*)

Hadrat Abū Bakr at-Tamastānī *rahimahullāh*

Merits

He is listed in the fifth level of *mashā'ikh*. He was a resident of Persia, and a student of Shaykh Shiblī *rahimahullāh* and Shaykh Ibrāhīm Dabbāgh *rahimahullāh*. He was considered to be one of the senior *mashā'ikh*. He was unique in his *karāmāt* and other signs. Shaykh Shiblī *rahimahullāh* held him in high regard, and used to accord him a lot of respect. He was overpowered by love for Allāh *ta'ālā*. His speech and allusions were of a high level, which the masses did not have the ability to understand.

Statements

1. He used to say:

ما الحيوة إلا في الموت

"Life is only in death."

In other words, the life of the heart is actually its death. This means that as long as the desires of the heart are not killed, the heart will not experience life.

Note: Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* expressed his condition in the following couplet: "The flame of love burnt us, and we found life after we died."2. He advised a person as follows: "You must take courage

because all actions are based on it, and all actions return to it."

3. "It is a great bounty when man is freed from his *nafs* because it is the same *nafs* which is a major barrier between you and Allāh *taʿālā*."

4. He used to say to his associates: "Sit more in the company of Allāh *taʿālā*, and less with people." He was encouraging them to remain in solitude.

5. "If a person follows the Qur'ān and Sunnah, emigrates to Allāh *taʿālā* with his heart, and emulates the ways of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*; then the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* are not ahead of him in any matter apart from the fact that they saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*."

Note: This means that the honour of companionship with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was enjoyed only by the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. No one after them – whether he is a *gauth* or a *quṯb* – shares this honour with them. This is the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He bestows on whomever He wills. However, the person who follows the Qur'ān and Sunnah together with following in the footsteps of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* will also be blessed with a great status, and a special closeness and acceptance with Allāh *taʿālā*. And – *inshā Allāh* – he will be raised with them. A person will be with those whom he loves. O Allāh, bestow us with

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love for the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and enable us to follow them.

6. "If you cannot remain respectfully in the company of Allāh *taʿālā*, then remain in the company of those who are in Allāh's company so that the blessings of their company will convey you to Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! This proves the merit of remaining in the company of the *Ahlullāh*. By virtue of remaining in their company, it becomes easy for a person to reach Allāh *taʿālā*, and a person can acquire His proximity and acceptance.

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* related: Hadrat Maulānā Shabbīr Ahmad ʿUthmānī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was present in an assembly of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* said: "An easy way of establishing a bond with Allāh *taʿālā* is to seat yourself in the hearts of the *Ahlullāh*. Because their hearts are already connected to Allāh *taʿālā*, if you make a place for yourself in their hearts, your relationship with Allāh *taʿālā* will also be established." On hearing this, Hadrat Maulānā Shabbīr Ahmad ʿUthmānī *rahimahullāh* said: "Wāh, wāh, Hadrat Maulānā! What an excellent prescription you prescribed. It is easy for us to practise on it."

Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* conveys the above theme as follows: "The strange thing is that I

[Allāh] get into the heart of a believer. If you desire Me, search for me in those hearts."

A poem of Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *rahimahullāh* conveys the same meaning. He says: "Who is it who caused the One whom the creations of the earth and heavens could not find to come into my heart?"

7. "The path is clear. The Qur'ān and Sunnah which form the original path are before us. The one who embraces the Qur'ān and Sunnah has actually distanced himself from his *nafs* and the creation, and shown disregard for this world. And he emigrated to Allāh *taʿālā* with his heart and soul. He is the one who found the correct path and followed in the footsteps of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*."

8. "Knowledge has distanced you from ignorance. Now ensure knowledge does not distance you from Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: The shaykh means that you must acquire genuine knowledge with which you reach Allāh *taʿālā*. Knowledge which does not convey you to Allāh *taʿālā* is actually ignorance. This statement contains a serious warning to the *ʿulamā'*. If they have come out of ignorance by virtue of knowledge, it does not necessarily mean that they have come out of deviation. Because there are many *ʿulamā'* whom Allāh *taʿālā* deviated because of their evil intentions and disrespect. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَأَضَلَّهُ عَلَى عِلْمٍ

"Allāh caused him to go astray despite his knowledge." (Sūrah al-Jāthiyah, 45: 23)

9. "The *nafs* is like a fire – when it is extinguished in one place, it ignites somewhere else. When the *nafs* finds peace on one side, it revolts on the other side."

Note: One should therefore never be unmindful of the *nafs*. Instead, he should always remain on his guard. Hadrat Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan Majdhūb *rahimahullāh*, the *khalīfah* of Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Thānwī *rahimahullāh* says: "Consider the striking of the *nafs* to be severe. It has not died as yet. If you are not unmindful of it on this side, it will cause you to slip on the other side."

Demise

He passed away in 340 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Hilyah*, vol. 10, p. 412)

Hadrat Abū Saʿīd Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Aʿrābī *rahimahullāh*

Name and merits

He is listed in the fifth level of Sufis. His name is Ahmad ibn Muhammad, and is well known by his *kunnīyyat*, Abū Saʿīd. He was a resident of Basra. He left his hometown and settled down in Makkah Mukarramah. He was a senior *ʿālim* and jurist, and an imām of the Haram. He compiled many books for the Sufis.

Statements

1. He used to say:

التصوف كله ترك الفضول، والمعرفة كلها اعتراف بالجهل

"Tasawwuf entails giving up futile activities, and total maʿrifat (recognition of Allāh taʿālā) entails acknowledging one's ignorance."

2. He says:

لا يكون الشوق إلا إلى غائب

"Yearning can only be for the unseen."

In explaining this statement, Shaykh al-Islam *rahimahullāh* says: People asked Dā'ūd Tā'ī: "Do you have yearning?" He replied: "No. I am not far from Him. The unseen is something which is yearned for. My friend is present."

3. “Allāh *taʿālā* gave some of the qualities of His friends to His enemies as well so that His enemies can use these qualities to treat His friends with mercy and affection. In this way, His friends can live in peace, and be protected from the harms and injuries of His enemies.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a wonderful statement. This is why many non-Muslims show mercy and affection to Muslims.

Demise

He passed away in 340 A.H. or 341 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 442)

Hadrat Abul Khayr al-Aqtaʿ at-Tīnātī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Hammād and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Khayr. He is well known by his *kunnīyyat*.

Merits

He is originally from the Maghrib (north west Africa) but settled down in Tīnāt. He performed many *karāmāt*, the explanation of which is quite long. He remained in the company of Abū ʿAbdillāh ibn al-Jallā' and other *mashā'ikh*. He was unique in his *tawakkul* (reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*). Even animals and insects had affinity with him. He was a man of powerful foresight.

An excellent manner of rectification

Ibrāhīm ar-Raqī relates: I went to meet Abul Khayr Tīnātī. He led the *maghrib salāh* but did not read Sūrah al-Fātihah with *tajwīd* (proper rules of recitation). So I thought to myself: 'This journey of mine has gone to waste. After the salāh, I went out to purify myself [either perform *wudū'* or take a bath] and a lion tried to attack me. I returned to the shaykh and said: 'A lion tried to attack me.' He went outside and said in a loud voice: 'Did I not tell you not to interfere with my guests?' The lion stepped aside and I proceeded to purify myself. When I returned to the shaykh, he said: 'You people are occupied in putting right you external selves, this is why you

are scared of a lion. We are occupied in rectifying our internal selves, this is why lions are scared of us.'"

Note: He drew his attention to the fact that he should not confine himself to external rectification alone. Rather, it is also necessary to rectify one's internal self. Reading the Qur'ān with *tajwīd* is not the only duty. Rather, it is also necessary to learn how to lead pure life. The Hadīth speaks out against Qur'ān recitation which remains on the tongue and throat without having an effect on the heart.

The story of how his hand got cut

He made a promise to Allāh *taʿālā* that he will not extend his hand with desire to the things which grow in the ground. But he forgot this promise, and broke a few bunches from a wild tree. He placed them in his mouth and was still chewing on them when he remembered his promise. He threw away the remaining bunches which were in his hand, and spat out whatever was in his mouth. He was very remorseful and sat down.

He relates: "I still had not seated myself properly, when a few riders and others on foot surrounded me. They ordered me to stand up and proceeded with me until they took me to the shore of the Alexandria sea. I saw a leader before whom there were some Abyssinians who had committed highway robbery. They found me to have the same dark complexion as them, and

coincidentally, I had my shield, spear and sword with me. So they all concluded that I was also a robber like the rest of them. They chopped off the hands and legs of the Abyssinians and eventually came to me. They ordered me to extend my hand, I extended it, and they chopped it off. I was then ordered to extend my leg, which I did. But I raised my head and said: 'O my Allāh! O my Master! My hand certainly committed a wrong, but what wrong did my legs commit?' A rider entered suddenly, imposed himself onto the leader and said: 'This is a righteous man. He is well known by the name of Abul Khayr Tīnātī. The leader threw himself to the ground and began kissing my chopped off hand. He held me, began crying, and asked me for forgiveness. I said: 'I had forgiven you the moment you chopped off my hand.' And I thought to my self: 'It was a hand which had committed a crime, that is why it was chopped off.'" (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 94)

Note: Take admonition from this, O people of understanding.

Statements

1. "I presented myself before the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and I was hungry at the time. So I said: 'O Rasūlullāh! I am your guest.' Saying this, I moved to one side and fell asleep behind the *mimbar* (pulpit). I was honoured by seeing Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in my dream, and I kissed him between his eyes on his forehead. Rasūlullāh

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sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam gave me a *rotī* (flat round bread) and I ate half of it. When I woke up, I found the remaining half in my hand."

2. "Never ask Allāh *taʿālā* to make you *sābir* (a patient person). Instead, ask Him for His affection and kindness. This is better because it is difficult for people like us to bear the pains of patience. When Zakarīyyā *ʿalayhis salām* fled from a Jew, a tree called out to him saying: 'O Zakarīyyā! Come, I will give you refuge.' The tree then opened itself and Hadrat Zakarīyyā *ʿalayhis salām* entered it. The moment it closed, the enemy reached there, got hold of his cloak, and shouted: 'Zakarīyyā is here.' Those hard-hearted people took out a saw so that they may saw off the tree together with him. When the saw reached him, he sighed out. Allāh *taʿālā* sent revelation to him saying: 'O Zakarīyyā! I take an oath by My honour and power. If you sigh out one more time, I will remove your name from the register of Prophets.' Hadrat Zakarīyyā *ʿalayhis salām* then remained patient until he was cut into two."

3. "The person who makes mention of his deeds is a show off. The person who makes mention of his [spiritual] condition is a claimant."

Note: We make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* to protect us against these tribulations. Āmīn.

Demise

He passed away in Egypt after 340 A.H. and was buried in Qarāfiyah Sughrā next to Munādah

Daylamīyyah. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Ṯabaqāt*)

Hadrat Abū ʿAlī Hasan ibn Ahmad al-Kātib *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Hasan, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAlī, and Ahmad al-Kātib is his father's name.

Merits

He was from among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Egypt. He held a distinguished position in his time. He remained in the company of Abū ʿAlī Rauzbārī *rahimahullāh*, Abū Bakr Misrī *rahimahullāh* and other *mashā'ikh*. He was a man of lofty conditions.

Statements

1. "When fear [of Allāh *taʿālā*] becomes firmly embedded in the heart, one will utter what is absolutely necessary." (*Tasawwuf Tārīkh ke Ā'īnah mei*, p. 112)

2. "The person who hears words of wisdom but does not practise on them is a hypocrite."

3. "Allāh *taʿālā* says: 'The person who holds on firmly to Me will reach Me.'"

4. "Love for flagrant sinners (*fāsiqs*) is an illness, and the treatment for it is to separate one's self from them."

5. "The gentle fragrance of love continually emanates from the lovers [of Allāh *taʿālā*] even if

they try to conceal it. The fragrance exposes them even if they try to conceal themselves. The fragrances point people towards them even if they keep them hidden."

6. "Allāh *taʿālā* bestows the sweetness of *dhikr* to His servants. If they are pleased with it and thankful to Allāh *taʿālā* for it, He bestows them with His affinity. But if they did not thank Him for it, He allows them to continue engaging in verbal *dhikr* but takes away its sweetness from them." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 96)

Demise

He passed away a few years after 340 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 96)

Hadrat Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn Nasīr al-Khawwās *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ja'far, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad, and his father's name is Muhammad ibn Nasīr.

Merits

He was a resident of the Khuld district of Baghdad, and is therefore popularly known as Shaykh Khuldī. His occupation was to make mats of palm leaves. He was a special student of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Khawwās and Shaykh Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahumallāh*. He also remained in the company of Shaykh Nūrī, Shaykh Ruwaym, Shaykh Samnūn and Shaykh Harīrī *rahimahumullāh*. He is an *'ālim* of the sciences of the Sufis and wrote many books.

Statements

1. "To consider one's *nafs* to be insignificant and uphold the sanctity of Muslims are acts of real courage."

2. "You must have high aspirations because aspirations convey people to perfection. Different forms of striving (*mujāhadāt*) alone will not convey a person." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 445)

3. "An act which is done for the sake of maintaining family ties does not negate sincerity."

Note: For example, if a person attends the funeral of a relative because it is a way of maintaining family ties, it is not considered to be ostentation. Instead, he will receive a separate reward for the *janāzah salāh* itself and for maintaining family ties.

4. "I heard Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* saying: 'If a person is sincere in his relationship with Allāh *taʿālā*, He will bestow him with peace from small claims [against him]."

5. "I consider the *maʿrifat* of Allāh *taʿālā* and knowledge of His injunctions to be the most superior things. This is because actions cannot be pure as long as they are not accompanied with knowledge. The person who does not have knowledge should not be considered to have actions. It is not good to waste knowledge and cast it aside."

6. He was asked: "Is the seeking of knowledge considered to be a deed?" He replied: "It is the greatest deed. It is only through knowledge that Allāh's *maʿrifat* is acquired, and it is only through knowledge that He is obeyed. It is only through knowledge that people of *hayā'* (shame and modesty) acquired *hayā'*. Knowledge precedes actions. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

"He taught man what he did not know."

Allāh *taʿālā* also says:

عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

"He taught him [man] to speak."

Only a defective person dislike knowledge.

7. "Remain in the company of the *Ahlullāh* because the treasures of this world and the keys to the Hereafter are in their hands." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 101)

Demise

He passed away in 341 A.H. in Baghdad. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 444)

Hadrat Abū ʿAmr Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm az-Zujājī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAmr, and his father's name is Ibrāhīm az-Zujājī.

Merits

He is a Nīsāpūrī and stayed in the company of Hadrat Junayd, Thaurī, Abū ʿUthmān, Ruwaym, and Khawwās *rahimahumullāh*. He went to Makkah and settled down there. He became the shaykh of Makkah and a personality who was looked up to. He performed hajj almost sixty times.

Statements

1. "A person who speaks about a condition which he himself does not possess will be a source of controversy for those who listen to him. This will also be a cause of base desires developing in his self, and Allāh *taʿālā* will make it impermissible for him to reach that condition [or state about which he was speaking]." We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

2. "If a person chooses to live in the neighbourhood of the Haram while his heart is attached to something apart from Allāh *taʿālā*, then he has displayed his own loss. If a person steals from a *hājī* who has come from outside in order to become wealthy through what he stole,

Allāh *taʿālā* will cast him far away and make his heart prone to greed and avarice; he will be complaining and grumbling all the time, the lustre of Allāh's bestowals will be removed from his heart, and Allāh *taʿālā* will make him detestable in the sight of His creation."

Note: The same can be applied to the person who chooses to live in Baytul Maqdis or in the Haram-e-Nabawī (Madīnah). It is essential for him to keep himself attached to Allāh *taʿālā* and abstain from sin.

3. "I found the following supplication to be quite effective in finding a lost item: First read Sūrah ad-Duhā three times, and then the following *duʿā*:

اَللّٰهُمَّ يَا جَامِعَ النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ، إِجْمَعْ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَ ضَالَّتِيْ

"O Allāh, the One who is to gather the people on a day regarding which there is no doubt. Gather me with my lost item."

He says: "A gem stone of mine fell into the Tigris River so I made *duʿā* with the above words and I found the gem stone among my pages which I had been turning this way and that way."

4. He was asked about the Hadīth:

تَفَكُّرُ سَاعَةٍ خَيْرٌ مِنْ عِبَادَةِ سَنَةٍ

"Pondering and reflecting for an hour is better than engaging in worship for one year."

He said: “It refers to forgetting your *nafs*.” (*Tabaqāt*, p. 101)

Demise

He passed away in 348 A.H. while he was in the Haram Sharīf. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abul Hasan ibn Ahmad al-Būsanjī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAlī, his father's name is Ahmad, his grandfather's name is Sahl, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan.

Merits

He met Abu ʿUthmān, and while in Iraq, he remained in the company of Ibn ʿAtā and Jarīrī. While in Shām, he remained in the company of Tāhir Maqdisī and Abū ʿAmr Dimishqī.

Statements

1. He was asked: "What is *tasawwuf*?" He replied: "In today's times, just the name of *tasawwuf* has remained, and not its essence. Whereas it has an essence and not just a name."

Note: He is speaking about the state of *tasawwuf* in the fourth century. As for the *tasawwuf* of today, do not even ask about it. It is very far from its essence.

2. "The person whose internal self is better than his external is a *walī*. The person whose internal and external is the same is an *ʿālim*. The one whose external is better than his internal is a *jāhil* (an ignoramus). This is because he will not seek justice for his own self, but seek justice from others. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 103)

3. He was asked about *murūwwat*, so he said: "It refers to not using those things which – according to the Sharīʿah – in the register of the *Kirāman Kātibīn* (angels who record our deeds) are recorded as being *harām*."

4. A person requested him to make *duʿā* for him, so he said: "May Allāh *taʿālā* save you from tests and tribulations." (*Tarjumah Risālah Qushayrīyyah*, p. 117)

Demise

He passed away in 348 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Hilyatul Auliyā'*, vol. 10, p. 408)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Sālim al-Basrī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and his father's name is Ahmad ibn Sālim.

He was a companion of Sahl ibn ʿAbdillāh Tusturī *rahimahullāh* and he narrated from him. He is not attributed to any other shaykh. He used to make *ijtihād* and his Tarīqah was the same as his teacher's, Sahl *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. "If a person has the ability to have full *tawakkul* (trust in Allāh *taʿālā*), it is not permissible for him to earn a living. Yes, if he earns merely as a support without relying on it, then it will be okay for him. *Tawakkul* is the state of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and earning a living is his Sunnah. The person who cannot have the state of *tawakkul* of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* must earn a living so that he does not fall from the state of the Sunnah as he fell from the state of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent word of advice.

2. He was asked: "How are the *Auliyā'* of Allāh *taʿālā* recognized from among people?" He replied:

"They are recognized through the following qualities: (1) softness in speech, (2) accepting the excuses and apologies of people, (3) and affection towards all the people irrespective of whether they are pious or not."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how he showed us the way of recognizing the *Auliyā'* of Allāh *taʿālā*.

3. "If a person wants his faults to remain concealed and his honour to remain intact, he must be forbearing and tolerant to the one who commits a wrong against him, and he must spend of his wealth on the people."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What words of wisdom.

4. "The sign of an intelligent person is that he remains aloof from worldly people. If not, he will turn away from his *Dīnī* and worldly good, and become engrossed with their wealth and possessions."

Note: This is happening quite often. Those who were serving *Dīn* are joining worldly people, becoming occupied in worldly activities, and leaving their service of *Dīn*.

5. "The darkness of ostentation in the heart is removed by sincerity. The darkness of lies is removed by the light of honesty."

6. "It is a sign of friendship when a person looks at the excellent qualities of his friend."

Note: The fact of the matter is that a person should not look in the least at the evils and faults of his friend. He should rather look at his good qualities. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

He passed away in 350 A.H. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 16, p. 273)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ar-Raughandī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is Hasan, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh.

Merits

He is listed in the fifth level of *mashā'ikh* and is from among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Tūs. He remained in the company of Abū Ghassānī Hiyarī and his *mashā'ikh*. He was a prominent figure in the Tarīqah and his *karāmāt* were clearly visible. He was a personality who divested himself of this world, a man of lofty states and high aspirations.

Statements

1. "Glad tidings to the one who has no means to Allāh *taʿālā* except Allāh *taʿālā* alone."

Note: However, the *wasīlah* (means) of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is an exception to this.

2. "Discarding the world for worldly purposes is also considered to be worldly."

Note: This shows that this is also a ruse to acquire of the world. People will consider such a person to be *tārik-e-dunyā* (one who has discarded the world) and give him more of this world.

3. “Do not discriminate in your *khidmat* (service of pious personalities) because those whom you would like to serve do not come forward. You should rather serve everyone without discrimination so that the one whom you wanted to serve will be served and your objective will be fulfilled.” (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 492)

4. “The person who discarded Allāh’s rights when he was young will be disgraced when he becomes old.” ʿAllāmah Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* says: “This refers to the time when his repentance is not accepted. Becoming disgraced means that he becomes eligible for it and not that it will necessarily happen. There are times when such people are not disgraced.”

5. “Allāh *taʿālā* sends down miseries in accordance with the *maʿrifat* of His servants so that the person’s *maʿrifat* will aid him in remaining patient over the misery. And so, the more the *maʿrifat* a person has, the more his misery. The less the *maʿrifat*, the less his misery.” (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 106)

Demise

He passed away in 350 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 106)

Hadrat Abū Muhammad ʿAbdullāh ibn Muhammad Rāzī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad, and his father's name is Muhammad Rāzī.

Merits

He was born and brought up in Nīshāpūr. He remained in the company of Abū ʿUthmān Hiyarī, Junayd Baghdādī, Yūsuf ibn Husayn and Ruwaym *rahimahumullāh*. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 102)

He is well known as Haddād. He was very reclusive and was immersed in the love of the True Beloved [Allāh *taʿālā*].

Statements

1. "Acts of worship (*ʿibādāt*) are known to the *ʿulamā'*. References (*ishārāt*) are known to the wise sages of the *ummah*. And subtleties (*latā'if*) are known to those who have knowledge of the Sharīʿah and Tarīqah."

2. "A sign of patience is when a person abstains from complaining, and conceals his losses and miseries from others."

3. "A sign of attention to Allāh *taʿālā* is to conceal one's secrets from others."

4. “As regards *hāl* (state and condition of a person), the best servant is the one who sees Allāh’s bounties on his self, and this enables him to acquire *maʿrifat* and proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*.”

5. “The best person is the one who thinks: Had it not been for Allāh’s grace, my salāh, *dhikr*, etc. would not be worthy enough to be presented in Allāh’s *taʿālā* court.” (*Hilyatul Auliyā’*, vol. 10, p. 318)

Note: Murshidī Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* expresses this as follows: “If He accepts it, we can conclude that we are also sincere. We offered our presents with our heart and soul.”

6. He was asked: “How is it that people know their own faults but are still attached to them? They neither give them up nor do they adopt the correct way.” He replied: “The reason is that instead of practising on their knowledge, people are proud of it. They have become so occupied with discussions about external actions that they completely disregarded discussions about internal actions. So Allāh *taʿālā* caused their hearts to become blind to the correct path, and stopped their body parts from His worship.” We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 102)

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Demise

He passed away in 353 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 102)

Hadrat Abul Hasan 'Alī ibn Bandār as-Sūfī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is 'Alī, his father's name is Bandār, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Hasan.

Merits

He is from the latter Sufis of Nīshāpūr and listed among the great Sufis. He remained in the company of Shaykh Abū 'Uthmān Hiyarī *rahimahullāh* and Shaykh Mahfūz *rahimahullāh*. While in Shām, he benefited from the company of Shaykh Tāhir Maqdisī ibn Jalā' and Shaykh Abū Nasr *rahimahumallāh*. He knew many Ahādīth by heart. He was a reliable narrator who had deep knowledge in the science of Hadīth. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 288)

Statements

1. He was asked about *tasawwuf* so he said: "It entails dropping the creation from your sight both internally and externally."

Note: In other words, one should not look at the creation's ability to benefit or harm. Rather, one should look solely at Allāh *ta'ālā* as one's helper and supporter.

2. "A Sufi can only reach perfection when he conceals his asceticism, and also conceals the

pleasure, affinity and joy which he experiences from his fellow brothers."

3. "When people like us are considered to be righteous, how can there be any hope for righteousness!?"

4. When any person came to him after meeting another *buzurg* (pious personality) whom he himself did not meet, he would kiss the hand of the person and walk behind him. He would say: "Brother! You have come after meeting such and such *buzurg* while I have not been able to meet him (this is why you are worthy of respect and honour)." (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 107)

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the high regard which people of the past had for the *buzurgs*. This is almost non-existent today. Respecting a person because of the high regard you have for a certain *buzurg* also shows extreme humility. Today, if a person returns from hajj or ʿumrah, we consider it a burden to go and visit him whereas he had the opportunity of visiting the sanctified lands. Unfortunately, we do not even pay any regard to the greatness of such a person.

5. "Stay far from those who disobey Allāh *taʿālā*. You must be happy with those with whose worship Allāh *taʿālā* is pleased. Abstain from becoming too occupied with people because this is not beneficial in our times."

6. “Save yourself from making excuses and your conviction will increase. Conviction is what will benefit you.”

Demise

He passed away in 359 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 288)

Hadrat Abul Qāsim Ibrāhīm ibn Muhammad an-Nasr Ābādī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Ibrāhīm, his father's name is Muhammad, his grandfather's name is Mahmūd, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Qāsim.

Merits

He is generally attributed to Nasr Ābād, but he was born in Nīshāpūr. He was a shaykh of his time as regards the sciences of *tasawwuf*. He was also proficient in other sciences. He was a *hāfiz* of the sciences of Hadīth and history. He had a special affinity with the sciences of *ma'rifat*. He was a student of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Shaybānī *rahimahullāh*. He benefited from the company of Shaykh Abū 'Alī Raudbārī, Shaykh Murta'ish, and Shaykh Abū Bakr Tāhir *rahimahumullāh*.

He went to Makkah Mu'azzamah in the latter part of his life. Shaykh 'Uthmān Maghribī came to welcome him and said to him jokingly: "Where is there place for you in Makkah?" Shaykh Nasr Ābādī replied: "What are you doing here? This is my place." Not very long thereafter, Shaykh 'Uthmān left Makkah Mukarramah for Nīshāpūr and passed away there; while Shaykh Nasr Ābādī remained in Makkah.

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Statements

1. "When any of the *tajalliyāt* (manifestations) of Allāh *taʿālā* are exposed to you, do not turn your attention to Paradise or Hell. In fact, do not even allow thoughts of them to enter your heart. And when you return from this state to what Allāh *taʿālā* made great, you must also consider it to be great (referring to Paradise and Hell)."

2. "The person who desires gifts has no value and honour. But the one who desires the giver has real value and honour." (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 451)

3. "When a person becomes well known as an ascetic, then it would be good for him to have some worldly possessions to show people so that his popularity as an ascetic may end. This is because the heart is the basis of doing something." (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 2, p. 29)

Note: We learn from this that if a person has asceticism in his heart, then this is real asceticism, and this is what is considered in the sight of Allāh *taʿālā*. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

4. Someone said to him: "Some people intermingle with women and claim that they are safe from the temptation of seeing them." He said: "As long as a person has a body, orders and prohibitions are applicable to him. As for a bachelor, even more precaution is demanded of him."

Note: We learn from this that such an excuse is not acceptable in the Sharīʿah. Everyone ought to abstain from such assemblies, especially those who are bachelors.

5. "*Jadhb* (when Allāh *taʿālā* draws a person to Himself) is swifter than *sulūk* (the lengthy path to Allāh *taʿālā*). When Allāh *taʿālā* bestows a person with a fervour to do good deeds, it is far better than this world and the Hereafter."

6. "*Tasawwuf* in essence is the strict adherence to the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and abstaining from the desires of the soul and from *bidʿāt* (innovations). It also entails the following: respecting the sanctities of the *mashā'ikh*, accepting the excuses of people, remaining constant on *aurād wa wazā'if* (the different forms of *dhikr*), and abstaining from rationalizing [injunctions of the Sharīʿah] and concessions (*rukhsah*). The one who deviates from this path will fall from the level of the *Ahlullāh*."

Note: It is necessary for every Muslim to keep the above in mind, especially those in the line of *sulūk* and *tasawwuf*.

7. "The final stage of the *Auliyā'* is the beginning stage of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*." (*Tabaqāt*, p. 105)

Demise

The *Tabaqāt* states that he passed away in 367 A.H. while the author of *Nafahātul Uns* states that

he passed away in 372 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh Abū Muhammad Rāsibī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is ʿAbdullāh, his father's name is Muhammad, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Muhammad.

Merits

He belongs to the fifth level of the Sufis, and he is from among the senior *mashā'ikh* of Baghdad. He first remained in the company of Shaykh ʿAtā' Muhammad Jarīrī *rahimahullāh* and then proceeded to Shām. From there he went to Baghdad.

Statements

1. "When Allāh *taʿālā* selects a heart for *taqwā*, love for this world and love for desires depart from it. The person is then apprised of many things of the unseen. As for the person whom Allāh *taʿālā* does not select for *taqwā*, he remains immersed in love for this world and is not apprised of the unseen."

2. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

تُرِيْدُوْنَ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا وَاللّٰهُ يُرِيْدُ الْآخِرَةَ

"You desire the wealth and luxuries of this world while Allāh taʿālā desires the good things of the Hereafter for you."

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"This verse makes mention of two desires. The one who desires this world is invited by Allāh *taʿālā* towards the Hereafter. As for the one who desires the Hereafter, Allāh *taʿālā* calls him towards His proximity. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَّشْكُوْرًا

"The one who desires the Hereafter and endeavours for it as he ought to, and he is a believer, then the endeavours of such people will be accepted."

"Acceptance in this verse refers to reaching the highest level of Allāh's *taʿālā* proximity and acceptance."

3. "It is a major tribulation to be compelled into remaining in the company of a person who does not agree with you, and you are unable to leave him."

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is really a fact, and many people are caught up in it.

Demise

The author of *Tabaqāt* says that he passed away in 367 A.H. while the author of *Nafahātul Uns* says that he passed away in 378 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Abū ʿUthmān Saʿīd ibn Salām al-Maghribī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Saʿīd, his father's name is Salām, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿUthmān.

Merits

He was an imām and leader of his time, and a shaykh of the Sufis. Sulamī said: "There is no one to match his Tarīqah. I have not seen a person of such high states as him, and one who was as particular about him about safeguarding time."

Khatīb said: "He was from among the senior *mashā'ikh*, he experienced many states, and performed many *karāmāt*." (*Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 16, p. 320)

He remained in the Haram Sharīf for a long time. His shaykh was Abū ʿAlī ibn Kātib. He also remained in the company of Habīb Misrī and Abū ʿAmr Zujājī *rahimahumallāh*. He went to Nīshāpūr. (*Tabaqāt*)

Statements

1. "The person who subjugates his body parts to the orders of Allāh *taʿālā* is in eternal *iʿtikāf* (seclusion with Allāh *taʿālā*)."

2. "When Allāh *taʿālā* wants to test His *Auliyā'*, He gives power to their enemies over them so that He may see how patient they are. If they remain

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patient over the miseries caused by their enemies, Allāh *taʿālā* honours them with His knowledge, conveys the good news of their attachment with Him, blesses them with proximity to Him, bestows them with His consciousness, enables them to enjoy His *dhikr*, instils them with His *maʿrifat*, makes them into imāms who are followed, makes them means of salvation for His servants, and causes their existence on earth to be a mercy."

3. A Hadīth states:

أَكْثَرُ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ بُلَهٌ

"The majority of the people of Paradise are those who are simple-minded."

He used to explain this Hadīth as follows: "They may be simple-minded in this world, but they will be extremely intelligent and gifted in the Hereafter."

4. "If a person prefers the companionship of wealthy people over the companionship of the *Ahlullāh*, Allāh *taʿālā* will cause his heart to die."

5. "A sinner is better than a *muddaʿī* (a claimant, one who makes claims of piety). This is because a sinner will seek the path to repentance while a claimant will commit errors under the influence of his claims."

6. “A *walī* may be *mastūr* (concealed) but he is not *maftūn* (put into tribulation).”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent statement.

Demise

He passed away in 373 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Tabaqāt*, p. 105)

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Muhammad ibn al-Fadl al-Balkhī *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his *kunnīyyat* is Abū ʿAbdillāh, and his father's name is Fadl Balkhī.

Merits

He was an imām of his time, a great ascetic and an erudite scholar. He was originally from Balkh but was removed from it because of differences based on *madh-hab*. So he went to Samarqand and settled down there. He remained in the company of Ahmad ibn Kadrawīyyah and other pious personalities. He was very much inclined to Abū ʿUthmān Hiyarī *rahimahullāh*.

Statements

1. He said that there are three signs of wretchedness:

1) A person has been given knowledge but deprived of practising on it.

2) A person has been given the ability to practise, but deprived of sincerity.

3) A person has been given an opportunity to remain in the company of the righteous, but he does not respect them.

Note: This shows that knowledge, practice, and companionship will only be beneficial when

knowledge is accompanied with practice, practice is accompanied with sincerity, and companionship is complemented with respect for the righteous. If not, there is a possibility of all this causing harm to the person. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to practise on this. Āmīn.

2. "Islam departs from four types of people:

1) The one who does not practise in accordance with his knowledge.

2) The person who does something regarding which he has no knowledge.

3) He does not learn what he does not know.

4) He stops others from learning."

Note: It is most wretched for a person to stop others from learning and practising. He listed very important points on the destruction of a person's Islam. They are most admonitory and insightful.

3. "It is most astonishing that people traverse jungles and deserts to go to the Kaʿbah and the Haram Sharīf because the effects of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* are there. Why do they not traverse their *nafs* and desires to reach their heart, because it has countless effects of their Allāh?"

Note: This statement is not speaking out against travelling to the Haram Sharīf. Rather, he is

speaking out against those who do not give up the desires of their *nafs* and pay no attention to their hearts. He does not want them to be deprived of the effects of Allāh *taʿālā*.

4. "If you see a *murīd* progressing in accumulating possessions of this world, you must conclude that it is a sign of his wretchedness and misfortune."

5. "It is said that when the people of Balkh expelled him from there, he made *duʿā* against them saying: "O Allāh! Deprive them of *sidq* (honesty, truthfulness)." Consequently, no *siddīq* was born in Balkh after that.

Note: We have to save ourselves from the curses of the pious personalities. (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 76)

Demise

He passed away in 391 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him.

Hadrat Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Hakīm al-Warrāq *rahimahullāh*

Name and lineage

His name is Muhammad, his father's name is 'Umar Hakīm, and his *kunnīyyat* is Abū Bakr.

Merits

He belongs to the second level of the *mashā'ikh*. He settled down in Balkh although he was originally from Tirmidh. His grave is also in Tirmidh. He is the maternal uncle of the famous *muhaddith*, Abū 'Īsā Tirmidhī, and he himself has his own *musnad*. (*Nafahātul Uns*, p. 300)

He met Ahmad ibn Khadrawīyyah, and remained in the company of Muhammad ibn Sa'd az-Zāhid and Muhammad ibn Balkhī. He wrote many well-known books on the subjects of spiritual exercises, etiquette, and social dealings.

Statements

1. "If avarice [greed] was asked: 'Who is your father?' It would reply: 'Having doubts about the decree of Allāh *ta'ālā*.' If it was asked: 'What is your job?' It would reply: 'The earning of despicability.' If it was asked: 'What is your final result?' It will reply: 'Deprivation.'"

2. He used to prohibit his associates from journeying and travelling [unnecessarily]. He used to say to them: "The key to every good and

blessing is to remain firmly seated in your place of what you resolved to do. You must remain seated until your resolution is corrected. Once your resolution is corrected, the beginning of blessings will become apparent to you."

Note: Hadrat Shaykh Farīd ad-Dīn ʿAttār *rahimahullāh* says: "O Farīd! Remain true to your resolution so that you are bestowed with the key to *ʿirfān* (true recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*).

3. People are of three categories: (1) *ʿulamā'*, (2) *fuqarā'* (Sufis), (3) *umarā'* (wealthy people). When corruption comes into the *umarā'*, it will result in destruction of the economic system. When corruption comes into the *ʿulamā'*, there will be defects in acts of obedience. When the Sufis retrogress, it will result in moral decay."

Note: We learn from this that the goodness and success of the Sharīʿah and Tarīqah is dependent on these three groups. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect them all. Āmīn.

4. "The person who only studies *ʿilm al-kalām* (scholastic theology) without acquiring asceticism (*zuhd*) and *fiqh* has become a *zindīq* (atheist, free-thinker). The person who acquires asceticism without *ʿilm al-kalām* and *fiqh* is a *bidʿatī*. The one who acquires only *fiqh* and no asceticism is a *fāsiq*. The one who acquires all three has attained salvation."

5. “The submission and servitude [turning in repentance] of the *fāsiq* (flagrant sinner) is better than the pride and arrogance of the obedient ones.”

6. “From among the masses there are people whose hearts are clean [of malice, hatred, etc.], whose actions are good and righteous, and whose tongues and private parts are pure [from sin]. If these qualities are not in them, they are not the masses but Pharaohs.”

Note: These are qualities of the masses which, in our times, the elite [*ʿulamāʾ* and those engaged in *Dīnī* activities] appear to be devoid of. Except those whom Allāh *taʿālā* protected.

6. “When corruption comes into the *ʿulamāʾ*, the flagrant sinners will gain power over the righteous, the unbelievers will gain power over the Muslims, the dishonest will gain power over the honest, and the ostentatious and hypocrites will gain power over the sincere Muslims. This will result in the destruction of *Dīn*, and corruption will become the norm.”

Note: This is witnessed in our times.

7. “Differences give rise to enmity, and enmity is the cause of calamities and afflictions.”

Note: We should abstain from differences and disputes, so that they do not result in enmity.

8. “If you would like to experience the joy of the way of the ascetics, you must abstain from love for leadership, and superiority among people.” (*Tabaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 78)

Demise

He passed away in 396 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Kitāb al-Ansāb*, vol. 4, p. 476)

Hadrat Abū Zayd Marwazī Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh*

His name was Muhammad ibn Ahmad. He was the Shaykh ash-Shāfiʿīyyah of his time. In addition to *fiqh*, he was also an imām in asceticism, worship, piety and purity.

Bazzāz relates: "I travelled with Shaykh Abū Zayd from Nīshāpūr to Makkah for hajj. I do not think the angels recorded any sin against him during this entire journey."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how pious and righteous our elders were. May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow all of us with a glimmer of their piety and righteousness so that we can be embellished by Allāh's pleasure.

Demise

He passed away in 371 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Aʿyān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 2, p. 23)

Hadrat Abul Fath ʿAlī ibn Muhammad ibn Husayn al-Bustī *rahimahullāh*

Name, lineage, birth

His name is ʿAlī, his *kunnīyyat* is Abul Fath, and his father's name is Muhammad ibn Husayn. He was born in 330 A.H. in the city called Bust.

Merits

He was a famous *muhaddith*, and litterateur and poet of the Arabic language. He was proficient in Shāfiʿī *fiqh*. His shaykh is Hāfiz Ibn Hibbān al-Bustī. Hāfiz Abū Sulaymān al-Khattābī al-Bustī *rahimahullāh* was his personal friend. Hākim Nīshāpūrī, the author of *Mustadrak*, is his student.

Writings

He used to compose excellent poems, and his *dīwān* (collection of poems) is available in print. He also wrote many admonitory and wise sayings in the form of prose. His famous *qasīdah* is known as *Qasīdah ʿUnwān al-Hikam*. It became well-known in the East and West and people benefit from its message till today.

Many *ʿulamā'* wrote commentaries to it. The fact of the matter is that the eloquence, rhetoric, and sweet manner in which he presented words of advice, are – according to the author – like valuable pearls and sapphires.

Towards the end of his book, *Ādāb al-Islam*, the famous *ʿālim* and scholar of Syria, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah *rahimahullāh*, quoted his *qasīdah* with excellent commentaries and explanations. In this way, he presented a valuable gift to the *ʿulamāʾ* and students. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him on our behalf with the best of rewards.

The honourable Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbdullāh Sāhib Kāpaudrī *dāmat barakātuhum* took pains in translating the *qasīdah* - *ʿUnwān al-Hikam* – to Urdu with a short commentary. The learned Maulānā has an academic affiliation, and has much affinity with spiritual sciences. He is an accepted litterateur in the Arabic and Urdu languages.

He titled his translation, *Makārim ash-Shiyam*, and it comprises of an explanation of sixty three poems. I took the privilege of quoting twenty six poems from it. They are as follows:

زيادةُ الْمَرْءِ في دنياه نقصانُ – وربحه غير محض الخير خسرانُ

"If man's worldly progress and profits are not absolutely good, they are nothing but loss and destruction."

No matter how much wealth and riches man may acquire in this worldly life, if good does not supersede it, then instead of the worldly riches being beneficial, they will be a cause of loss.

وكلُّ وجدان حَظٍّ لا ثبات له – فإنَ معناه في التحقيق فقدانُ

"If there is no permanency in the acquisition of any benefit, then in reality it means it is a loss."

If, from every good thing which man acquires in this world, he does not earn success in the Hereafter and reward through it; then it is certainly a loss. He would have lost something, and not found it.

يا عامرًا لخرابِ الدَّارِ مجتهدًا – بالله هل لخراب الْعُمْرِ عُمْرانُ؟

"O you who are striving to inhabit a place which is to be destroyed! By Allāh, can there be inhabitance in the destruction of one's life?"

The person who spends all his energies and capabilities to inhabit this world without bothering about the Hereafter is as if he is wasting away and destroying his dear life. This is why the poet is asking: can there be inhabitance after destroying one's life?

ويا حريصًا على الأموالِ تجمعُها – أنسِيتَ أنّ سرورَ المالِ أحزانُ؟

"O you greedy person in accumulating wealth! Have you forgotten that the joy of wealth ends in sorrow?"

Don't you know that if you do not fulfil the rights and dues of wealth, then instead of it bringing you joy it will bring you sorrow?

زَعِ الفواد عن الدنيا وزينتها – فَصَفْوُها كدرُ والوصل هجرانُ

"Empty your heart of this world and its beauty because even whatever is clean in it is filthy, and whatever attachment is in it leads to separation."

You must empty your heart of this world and its beauty because although it may seem to be appealing, it is a deception in reality. This world does not remain with anyone because its attachment is really a separation.

أحسن إلى الناس تَسْتَعْبِدْ قلوبَهُم – فطالما استَعْبَدَ الإنسان إحسانُ

"Continue doing good to people and you will win over their hearts. Many a time, kindness has made people obedient."

When you do good to people and are kind to them, you will earn their friendship. Man generally obeys the one who is kind to him. There is an Arabic saying:

جبلت القلوب على حب من أحسن إليها، وبغض من أساء إليها

"The hearts naturally love those who are good to them, and abhor those who ill-treat them."

An Urdu poet says: "You can kill with kindness, and be victorious through kindness."

أَقبل على النفس واستكمل فضائلها – فأنت بالنفس لا بالجسم إنسانُ

"Turn your attention to your nafs and try to perfect its merits, because your human existence is by virtue of your nafs and not your body."

The soul is the essence of man. If it is set right and purified with internal merits, the person will be worthy of being called a human in the true sense of the word. If not, there is no difference between man and animals.

وكن عل الدهر معوانا لذي أملٍ — يرجو نداك فإنّ الحُرّ مِعوانُ

"You must always be of great help to the one who expects your giving him. This is because a noble person is always of help to people."

The mark of a noble man is not to allow those who have hopes in his help and assistance to lose hope in him. He must help the needy as much as possible. To abstain from helping despite having the means is the work of a miser.

واشدد يديك بحبل الله مُعْتصِمًا — فإنه الرُّكنُ إن خانَتْك أركانُ

"Hold on firmly with both your hands to the rope of Allāh, because when other supports in this world break, it is the only support which will give you refuge."

Man should always place his trust in Allāh's help and support, and remain attached to Him alone. Man considers many people in this world to be his helpers, but they are of no help to him at the time of difficulty. Allāh *taʿālā* alone helps the person even in such times. Allāh *taʿālā* says in

the Qur'ān: "Place your trust in Allāh alone if you are true believers."

من يتق الله يُحْمَد في عراقِبه – ويَكْفِهِ شرَّ من عزُّوا ومن هَانُوا

"The person who fears Allāh will experience good results. This taqwā (fear of Allāh) will safeguard him against the evil of every noble and ignoble person."

Every task of man is accomplished in a good way when it is accompanied with *taqwā* and fear of Allāh *taʿālā*. Neither can the people of authority nor the riff raff cause him any harm.

من استعان بغير الله في طلب – فإن ناصره عَجْزُ وخِذْلانُ

"The person who seeks the help of anyone other than Allāh for the fulfilment of his need will find his helper to be a failure and incapable."

Man should ask only of Allāh *taʿālā* for the fulfilment of his needs. Relying on anyone other than Allāh *taʿālā* will result in nothing but humiliation.

من كان للخير منَّاعًا فليس له – على الحقيقة إخوانُ وأخدانُ

"Anyone who is an obstacle in good works will have no real friends and brothers."

The person who puts obstacles in good works will be looked down upon by everyone. No one can be his friend.

من كان للعقل سلطان عليه غَدَا — وما على نفسه للحرص سلطانُ

"The one who keeps his dealings subservient to his intellect will find his nafs not being overpowered by greed."

Man must use his intellect in every matter and ponder over its advantages and disadvantages. If he does this, he will be safeguarded against the wrong which he would do because of greed. If not, man crosses the limits because of greed and worldly motives.

من عاشَرَ الناسَ لاقَى منهم نَصَبًا — لأنَّ سُوْسَهُمْ بغيٌ وعدوانُ

"The person who interacts with people will have to bear difficulties from them. This is because people are generally prone to rebellion and enmity."

Jealousy, enmity and other evil qualities are generally found in people. So having contact with people in general will cause one to experience harm and misery from them. It is therefore better to reduce as much contact with them as possible.

من استشار صروف الدَّهْرِ قام له — على حقيقة طبع الدهر بُرْهانُ

"The person who inquires about the reality of the ups and downs of time, he will find sufficient proof about the temperament of time."

In other words, if a person ponders over the ups and downs of time, and the different events which take place in it, he will realize that there is

nothing in this world which is reliable, and nothing in this world which is eternal. Conditions constantly change in this world. Allāh *taʿālā* says: "Such days We change each in due course among the people." (Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 140)

من يَزْرَعِ الشَّرَّ يَحْصُدْ في عواقبه – نَدَامةً، ولِحَصْدِ الزَّرْعِ إِبَّانُ

"The person who sows evil (commits evil) will reap regret. There is certainly a time when the crop has to be harvested."

A person will receive the recompense of good and evil. If he does good, he will be rewarded with good. If he commits evil, he will be recompensed with evil. There is a famous saying: "As you sow, so shall you reap."

من إستنام إلى الأشرار نام وفي – قميصِهِ منهُمُ صلٌّ وثعبانُ

"The person who chooses the company of evil people is like a person who is sleeping while a poisonous snake is in his kurtah."

Whoever remains in the company of evil people will certainly suffer harm at some time or the other. Like a person who sleeps with a snake in his sleeve. He is certainly sleeping with the means for his destruction. The companionship of evil people is the same.

ورافقِ الرِّفْق في كلِّ الأمور فلم – يندم رفيقُ و لم يَذْمُمْهُ إنسانُ

"Be soft and lenient in every matter because a soft and lenient person never regrets, and is never reproached by anyone."

The person who is soft-natured is able to accommodate and interact with everyone. He will not experience a matter which will cause him to regret. Everyone praises such a person, no one speaks ill of a soft-natured person.

أَحْسِن إذا كان إمكانُ ومَقْدِرَةُ – فلن يدُومَ على الإحسان إمكانُ

"Do good [be kind and helpful] if it is possible and you have the power to do it, because the power to do good does not remain with a person all the time."

If Allāh *taʿālā* gives a person the power and opportunity to do good to people, he must do it. This is because man's condition changes and he does not have the occasions and opportunities to do good. He must take advantage of every opportunity and do good.

دَعِ التكاسُلَ في الخيراتِ تَطْلُبُهَا – فليس يسعدُ بالخيرات كسلانُ

"Do not be lazy in your quest for doing good works because a lazy person cannot do good works."

You must endeavour and strive to do whatever good work you can do. It is difficult to do good in the presence of laziness.

لا ظِلَّ للمَرْء يعرَى من تُقًى وَنُهًى – وإن أظلَّتْه أوراق وأفنانُ

"If a man is devoid of piety and intelligence, he has no position of honour even if he has other means of honour and strength."

Even if a person has thousands of worldly means, they cannot give him honour if he does not possess piety and intelligence. If a person has piety and intelligence, he can acquire true honour even if he is a pauper.

والناس أعوان من والَتْه دولَتُهُ — وهم عليه إذا عادته أعوانُ

"When a person has worldly wealth, people become his helpers. But when the world turns away from him, the very same people become his enemies."

In the presence of worldly wealth, people will support a person to the full. But when his wealth is no longer with him, they also cast him aside.

لا تُودِعِ السِرَّ وشَّاءَ يَبُوح بهِ — فَمَا رَعَى غَنَمًا في الدَّوِّ سِرْحانُ

"Do not share your secret with a person who will convey it to others. A wolf does not safeguard the sheep in the fields."

Never share a secret with a person who cannot conceal it, and who is in the habit of conveying secrets. If a naïve person had to put a wolf in charge of his sheep, the consequences of it are well known.

لا تحسب الناس طبعا واحدا فلهم — عزائز لست تحصيهن ايوان

"Do not consider all people to be the same. Each person has his own temperament and a different nature."

There is a Persian saying which states that Allāh *taʿālā* did not make the five fingers the same. In other words, man and his ways differ. You cannot wield the same stick on all. Each one must be treated according to his temperament and rank.

لا تحسبَنَّ سرورا دائما أبدا — من سرّه زمن ساءته ازمان

"Never consider happiness to be eternal. When time brings joy to a person, it also brings many sorrows to him."

When man experiences joy, he must not think it will last forever. Conditions change constantly. If you are happy today, you may be sad tomorrow. Eternal happiness will be experienced by a believer in Paradise.

وكل كسرٍ فإن الدين يجبره — وما لكسر قناة الدين جبران

"The Sharīʿah and the Dīn have the ability to fill every gap. But if there is a gap in Dīn, it cannot be filled by anything else."

When man experiences any loss in his life, the *Dīn* shows him a way to make up for it. But if a person allows *Dīn* to slip away from his life, it is a loss which cannot be filled by anything else. Loss in *Dīn* is the greatest loss.

We quoted the above poems with their translation and commentary as an example. They are sources of admonition and advice for all of us. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to practise accordingly. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Demise

He passed away in 400 A.H. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His mercy on him. (*Makārim ash-Shiyam, tarjumah ʿUnwān al-Hikam*, pp. 1-31)

https://darulilm.wordpress.com

CONCLUSION

By the grace and help of Allāh *taʿālā*, the second volume of *Aqwāl-e-Salaf* is completed with a new arrangement and beneficial additions. This volume contains biographies and statements of the Tābiʿīn, Tābiʿāt, Tabaʿ Tābiʿīn, and also biographies and statements of the *Auliyā'* until the end of the fourth century of the *hijrah*. Their year of demise was also provided. All this was done after much investigation and research.

Inshā Allāh, the third volume will contain biographies and statements of the pious elders from the fifth to the tenth centuries.

For example, it will contain the following personalities: Hadrat Abū ʿAlī Muhammad Daqqāq, Hadrat Abū Bakr Khatīb Baghdādī, Hadrat Abul Qāsim al-Qushayrī, Hadrat Hujjatul Islam Imām Ghazzālī, Hadrat Sayyidunā ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlānī, and Hadrat ʿAllāmah Ibn Taymīyyah *rahimahumullāh*. All inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone, and it is through His favour that good deeds are concluded.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Ilāhābādī
Maktabah Dār al-Maʿārif
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7 Safar 1432 A.H./12 January 2011

❁❁❁

Al-hamdu lillāh, thumma al-hamdu lillāh – all thanks are due solely to Allāh *taʿālā* for having enabled me to complete the English translation of this blessed and inspiring book. I make an earnest *duʿā'* to Allāh *taʿālā* to accept this translation, to make it a means for my salvation in this world and the Hereafter, and to include me among His righteous servants by virtue of this humble contribution.

أُحِبُّ الصَّالِحِيْنَ وَلَسْتُ مِنْهُمْ – لَعَلَّ اللهَ يَرْزُقُنِيْ صَلاَحَا

"I love the righteous although I am not of them. Perhaps Allāh will bestow me with righteousness [by virtue of my love for them]."

As with all human endeavours, there are bound to be errors, mistakes, and slip-ups in the translation. I humbly request the reader to inform me of them so that these could be corrected in future editions.

Constructive criticism and suggestions will be highly appreciated. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ، وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ

Was salām
Mahomed Mahomedy
16 Muharram 1433 A.H./12 December 2011
Durban, South Africa.